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# COUNTRY LIFE

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J. G. Hubback

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OTHER PROPERTY AND AUCTIONS  
ADVERTISING PAGE 1090



# COUNTRY LIFE

Vol. CI No. 2630

JUNE 13, 1947



*Pearl Freeman*

## MRS. DAVID SMILEY

is the younger daughter of Lieutenant-Colonel Lord Francis Scott and the late Lady Francis Scott, of Old Knebworth, Hertfordshire. Before her recent marriage to Major David de Crespigny Smiley, youngest son of the late Major Sir John Smiley, Bt., and the Dowager Lady Smiley, she was the widow of Major Hugo Tweedie

# COUNTRY LIFE

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## AGRICULTURAL LAND PLANNING

FOR many years we have seen housing and industrial development—especially on the fringes of long-established towns and cities—eating into the good farm land which for centuries supplied the town-dweller with most of his food. When, in the tragic days of ribbon-development, the process was carried all over the countryside, it became increasingly evident that a halt must be called; that local planners, when they were in a position to act effectively, must take full account of the intrinsic national value of agricultural land before proposing, or consenting to, development. The events of the past ten years have tragically underlined the lesson and the position with regard to food supply and foreign exchange has made only too clear the contrast between the value of good farm land to the nation, and its value in the market if confined to its agricultural use. In planning schemes to-day the preservation of farm land is recognised as of the first importance, and we have just seen three sites, suggested in the Greater London Plan for development under the New Towns Act, turned down by the Minister of Town and Country Planning because of the disturbance to agricultural production which their adoption would have involved.

The considerations which apply to the planning of Greater London apply also to the smallest piece of development on the fringes of a town or village or, it may be (for non-residential purposes) in the heart of the countryside itself. On what basis should the agricultural value of any piece of land which it is proposed to put out of cultivation be estimated in order to compare it with alternative sites elsewhere? The obvious answer is: on a market value based on its present productivity. But from the long-term, national point of view something more scientific is needed. Every piece of land should be nationally valued not by its apparent productivity under existing, and partly fortuitous, conditions but after an examination of all the agricultural possibilities inherent in its site and its soil, as well as of the less permanent human characters arising from history and economic factors. This demands, of course, a really comprehensive system of land classification for agricultural purposes, and two very serious attempts have recently been made to provide one for the West Midlands and one for the three counties of Gloucestershire, Somerset and Wiltshire. The Land Utilisation Survey of Britain—which was completed under the directorship of Dr. Dudley Stamp during the war—provides a picture of the use actually made of the land in the period 1931-38, on the basis of a somewhat complex classification into ten categories. The West Midland Group of planners and the Reconstruction Research Group of Bristol University have since adopted a simpler scheme,

and have produced a series of maps showing the large-scale lay-out of the land in their areas on a basis of site and soil factors instead of on crop production at a particular time.

The existence of such maps will obviously lighten the tasks of large-scale planning, and the same scheme can equally be applied to farm land in the smallest areas. This is the beginning of an agricultural era in which in parts of the country—particularly the Highlands—we shall have unprecedented opportunities for agricultural development. Elsewhere the provision of better supplies of water and electric power may well “step up” a good deal of marginal land into something more productive—especially if the use of the new grass-land technique is retained and extended. A detailed scheme of land classification based upon a field-by-field soil examination of all the factors involved would

## ENCOUNTERS

THEY touched my life. Such fleeting impact only

May spin the airy soul to Heaven or Hell.  
I who remain, immutable and lonely,  
Can wish them well.

They passed. My silence echoes to their story.  
Out of my darkness is their light made plain.  
They storm the stars from glory unto glory—  
I touched them: I remain.

MARY-ADAIR MACDONALD.

take 30 or 40 years to complete. The more generalised classification now being undertaken will, even now, be invaluable to all concerned in town and country planning. It emphasises the significance of “site”—as distinct from “soil”—factors; the importance of slope and of micro-climate, for instance. How many planners realise that a local frost-pocket may rule out of use a particular site for fruit-growing, while a sheltered position may render another particularly well suited for early crop production? Most important of all, perhaps, is the fact that, if the depth, water-conditions and texture of any soil are satisfactory, good farming can be relied upon to build up the requisite nutrient status—given the time!

## PROJECTS AND RESULTS

THE latest plan for the City of London, illustrated on other pages of this issue, suggests hopefully a start being made next year on the most urgent undertakings, estimated to take ten years, to be followed by a thirty-year period of general rebuilding. Yet this colossal programme is only one of a score of others little less extensive, and they await, before they can be begun, the building of several new towns which cannot be started before the arrears of small house building are overtaken. The housing returns for April show a recovery from the set-back caused earlier by the weather, but the figures for neither houses nor building materials are encouraging. In these circumstances the charges made at the Labour Party conference at Margate with regard to “the inefficiency and frustration which exists throughout the building industry” merit examination. There certainly appears to be considerable friction between the Government and the workers on the subject of payment by results. The building trade workers’ leader said that the Minister of Works had made “the most premature announcement that a scheme for payment by results had been accepted by the building industry,” and denounced the statement as untrue. But until the pace of building can be accelerated, geared as it is to the supply of materials, which ultimately depends on the tonnage of coal produced, the prospect of the London or any other city plan ever being realised appears remote indeed. All projects and prospects of improved living conditions are illusory until the vicious circle of restrictive practices is broken by an expanding system of incentives, not confined to a single industry, but applying to all. The sooner Stakhanovites are encouraged to make their appearance the sooner projects will be translated into results.

## THE FORTUNATE 'FORTIES

FOR some mysterious reason founders of colleges seem to have been stirred to acts of piety when their century, coming to its prime, had turned forty, with the result that we are now passing through a plethora of centenaries. The celebrations of the quinquacentenaries of Henry VI's sister foundations at Eton and Cambridge had to be postponed owing to the war, and at Eton there is now being held a commemorative exhibition which was noticed in these pages a week ago. Last year Christ Church, Oxford, celebrated its final foundation by Henry VIII in 1546. A year later, as the shadow of death stole nearer, his thoughts turned to Cambridge, where last week the King and Queen were present at the celebrations commemorating what was almost the last act of Henry's life, the foundation of Trinity College. And there are other College centenaries on the way. At Cambridge, Pembroke attains its sixth this year, and Queens' its fifth next year, while in 1949 occurs the sixcentenary of Gonville Hall, which Dr. Caius later on re-founded as Gonville and Caius. In 1949, too, University, the oldest Oxford College, will reach the great age of seven hundred. This unconscious conviction that the 'forties were fortunate seems to have been shared by Cardinal Kempe, who in 1447 founded a college at Wye, near Ashford, Kent. His college of priests, now a college of farmers, is described elsewhere in this issue.

## PURSUIT OF BEAUTY

THE National Art Collection Fund Report recalls that at the annual meeting there was a refreshing brush between some members, Lord Crawford (the chairman), and Lord Lee of Fareham on the issue of whether work by, for instance, Picasso qualifies for acquisition by the Fund. Lord Lee had said that the Fund should never be tempted to run after the ephemeral, but concern itself with the basic, permanent values, which he defined as beauty, quality and fine workmanship. Why, he asked, do the modern arts apparently seek the abnormal and unpleasant? Is there not enough that is sordid and ugly in the world for the pursuit of beauty and decency by men of genius to be worth study? Lord Crawford defined the Fund's criterion as not “does this work fit in with a theory?” but “is it a good work of art?”, and pointed out that the Contemporary Art Society exists to deal with recent, doubtful, cases. There is, it may be observed, quite a possibility that, together with Christian civilisation, the conception of beauty may be extinguished in the world by materialism in its various forms. The Fund's present policy undoubtedly satisfies the vast majority of its supporters. Members are being given the opportunity in July of visiting Wrotham Park, Barnet, designed by Isaac Ware and containing important collections; and Syon House, of which the rooms are perhaps Adam's most spectacular achievement.

## LADIES AT GULLANE

THIS week the ladies have been playing for their championship in the golfing heart of the Lothians, at Gullane. It is a fine course, and it has a still finer view. Once the player has made the steep climb of the second hole, and has reached the top of Gullane hill, with links all round him, with the prospect of the sea, and the mighty tracery of the Forth Bridge in the distance, and the curlews calling, he is in one of the golfing paradises of the world. This championship may, like that at Carnoustie and the Walker Cup at St. Andrews, go to America, for there is one very dangerous challenger from that country. The name of Mrs. Mildred Zaharias conceals the most famous of female all-round athletes, formerly known as Miss Babe Widricksen. In the thirties she was winning races and javelins in the Olympic Games; then she became eminent at basketball, and now she has become by all accounts the most formidable of American lady golfers. She must be very good and may go one better than did that delightful player, Miss Glenna Collett, now Mrs. Vare. Miss Wethered stopped Mrs. Vare and no one has quite succeeded to her empire.



# A COUNTRYMAN'S NOTES

By

Major C. S. JARVIS

**A**N unusual feature of this spring is the remarkable manner in which the head of water in the various streams and rivers has been maintained at flood level. Admittedly the weather of February and March was phenomenal, but since then, though there has been a certain amount of rain, the fall has not been heavy enough to account for rivers remaining at their present heights. Our little chalk stream, which at ordinary times only overflows its banks slightly after torrential rains, has been well over the adjoining water-meadows and flooding the near-by road for at least six months, and even now, despite the efforts of the Catchment Board at canalisation on the lower reaches, the level is still very high, so that the gravelly runs are miniature torrents and the quiet stretches surging whirlpools.

One of the results of this over-abundance of water is that the little river does not seem to have any banks at all. The more or less solid turf of other days has been replaced by something suggestive of the wettest part of a Connemara bog, and the chalk-stream trout, which is essentially a lover of rigid routine, apparently does not know what to do in the circumstances. If he takes up his usual stance under the cast-entangling willow branch, which he frequents in ordinary times, the force of the stream makes the maintenance of this position very exhausting and, moreover, the natural flies, if any, seem to float down on the wrong eddy. On the day when I chose to visit the water the trout one and all seemed to think that rising to the fly was a wearisome and unsatisfactory proceeding, and the brace I caught on something that I persuaded myself was a nymph provided internal evidence that they had been drawing their rations from the river's bottom.

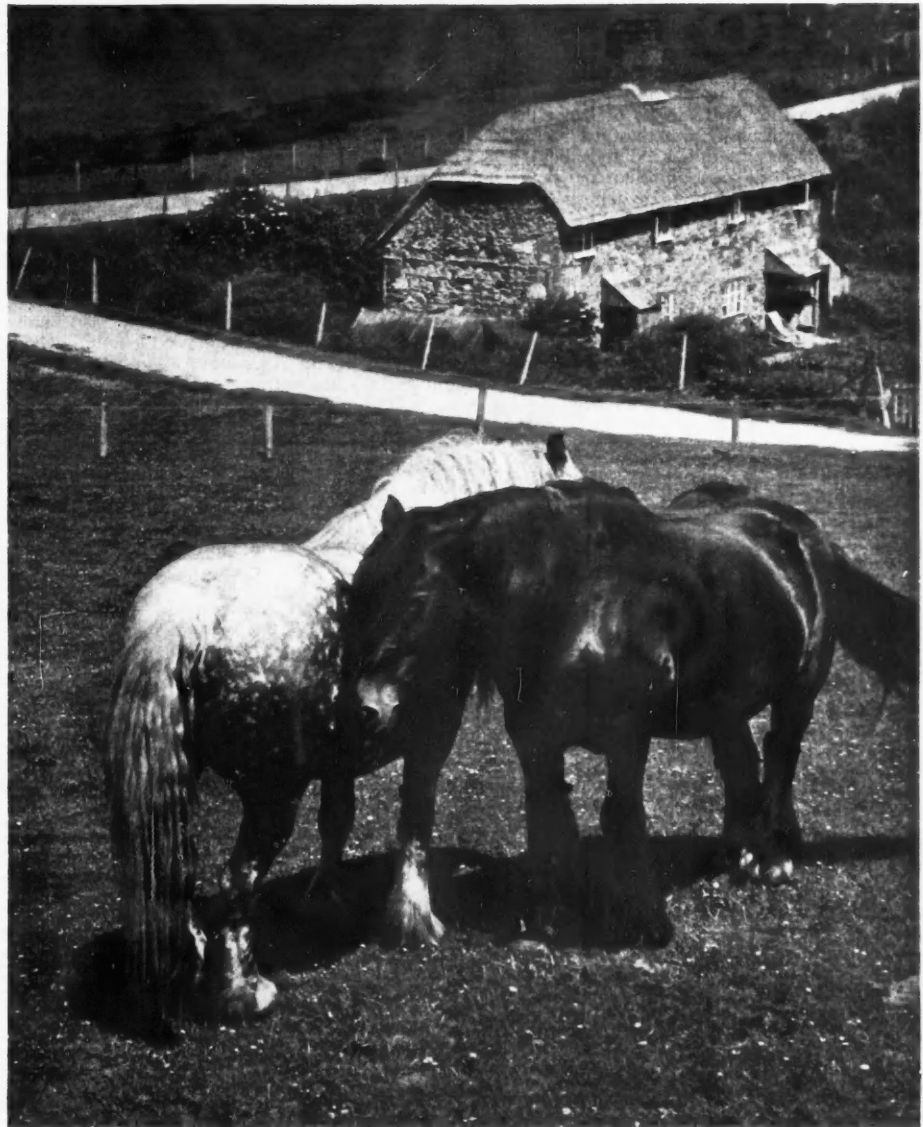
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**I**HAVE fished this small river now since my boyhood days, and thought that I knew all the pitfalls for the unwary along the banks; and the average chalk stream does provide some amazing pitfalls. The patch of mud by the clump of bulrushes which is not quite so viscous as it looks; the narrow side channel which appears to have a firm gravel bottom, but which definitely has not; and the hidden strand of barbed wire dating back to the 1914-18 war in the deadly nightshade clump. The constant flooding of 1947, however, seems to have had a disintegrating effect on the geography of the stream's banks, and I discovered to my cost that in this world one is always learning something new.

\* \* \*

**T**HERE are two pastimes in the pursuit of which the operator, with his mind a complete blank as to other and more mundane things, is in the habit of stepping backwards a few paces from time to time for some good reason or another, namely fishing and painting. An uncle of mine was a very keen amateur artist, and one always knew when he was putting in what are known as the £10 touches by the crashes one would hear in his studio. He would go close up to the easel to pick out the high lights on the church steeple, and when he stepped back a couple of paces to view the effect of his brush-work he would stumble over the coal scuttle. Then he would return to the picture to strengthen the shadows in the elm trees, and on going back this time to decide if he had overdone the purple wash he would cleverly avoid the scuttle, but knock over the other easel on which yesterday's oil masterpiece was drying.

In the same way, should the dry-fly man when casting upstream be suddenly confronted by a trout that starts to rise immediately in front of him, the quickest way to cover the newcomer is not to reel in the surplus line but to



A. Ronald Traube

## OLD FAITHFULS

step back two or three paces in order to employ the whole length of the cast easily. Owing to my intimate knowledge of the topography of the aforesaid stream I can usually do this with impunity, but when I made the movement on the opening day this season I stepped back into a bottomless pit of liquid mud into which I sank well above my waders to my waist. To my certain knowledge nothing like this man-trap was in existence in 1906, nor in any subsequent year, and I cannot think who or what contrived it. I should very much like to lay the blame on the Catchment Board, but I suppose that, like so many other things, one must attribute it to the weather.

\* \* \*

**T**HE truth of the old saying "One man's meat is another man's poison" was brought home to me the other day when a friend picked out the largest specimen from some black olives I had acquired after some research from a Greek grocer and asked: "Are these those wonderful black olives about which you and other semi-Orientals talk such a lot?" He then put it into his mouth and the next moment with a strangled scream ran out into the shrubbery. It would seem, therefore, that the sustaining meal of white goat's-milk cheese garnished with plenty of black olives glistening in their own oil that the Greeks and Syrians esteem so highly does not appeal to the average British palate. If Mr. Strachey were to import a quantity of them to supplement in some way the shortage in the fat ration, I suppose that, although he would please me and a few others with vitiated Eastern palates, he would arouse more criticism from the great mass of the population than he

did with his pineapples. It must be very trying to be in the position of the Minister of Food these days, since he must have learnt by this time that, although one may please some of the people all the time and all the people some of the time, it is impossible to please all the people all the time.

\* \* \*

**R**EALISING as I do that my palate is in the minority, I submit in all humility that the most popular variety of British potato, the Majestic, is the poorest flavoured and least satisfying of all the many varieties that we can grow. Of the catalogues of two well-known seedsmen I received recently one refers to the Majestic as "an enormous cropper of excellent quality," and the other, having said something about its cooking properties, states that it is "an exceptionally heavy cropper growing nearly all large tubers." I am in full agreement over the Majestic's prolific cropping qualities and agree that the yield is "nearly all large tubers" (some of them are so large that they have to be cut into four pieces before they will fit into an average-sized saucepan), but I am by no means certain that the flavour of a potato is improved by being cut into four portions before it is cooked. In my biased opinion the ideal sized potato is one of 3 in. diameter and no more, unless it be required for baking, and that, although tubers above this size may be excellent for fried fish and chip shops, they are not desirable in the ordinary household.

I can quite understand why the farmer and the market-gardener grow the Majestic variety, since, as there are no regrettable class distinctions with potatoes as there are in the apple

world with the Cox right at the top of the list, a professional will naturally grow the type that will yield the greatest tonnage per acre—and unquestionably the Majestic does this.

OWING to the severe frosts of last winter, and the unusual activities of a large-sized field mouse that prefers a shed to a field, my own potato crop did not quite see me through to those halcyon days when one digs the first of the "earlies." As the result I had to buy some of those that were available in the local market, and these, of course, were the ever-popular Majestic, their popularity being due to no other type being on sale. These, after my very solid, sustaining and floury Kerr's Pinks, which maintain their quality "until potatoes come again," seem like tasteless wax, and even the hens look at them with a cold, calculating eye. While indulging in this very carping criticism of a tuber which seems to appeal to the British palate, I am fully aware that the soil has much to do with the quality of a potato, and that possibly my highly-esteemed Kerr's Pinks may be most indifferent in flavour and quality when grown elsewhere, and that the Majestic is not always so aggressively majestic as regards size.

THERE is an old and very true Dorset saying, with regard to boys employed on a farm, that "one boy is a boy, two boys are half a boy and three boys are no boy at all." This applies also to officials, except that, whereas the three boys on the farm go off to float boats on the brook, the three officials, finding time hanging on their hands, go forth and make work for themselves by interfering with, and hanging up the work of, others.

Speaking as an ex-government official myself I can confirm that as a class we should be used very sparingly indeed—treated like garlic, in fact—for an over-dose of officials is quite as offensive as an over-dose of this highly-scented bulb. An under-staffed department will seldom fail to deliver the goods, but an over-staffed one will almost certainly fail and in addition make a nuisance of itself.

THE following is a case in point. Until recently the growing of canary seed and buckwheat on land that might be used for food production was prohibited, the regulation being, of course, intended to apply to considerable acreages that might carry wheat or other corn. In Lincolnshire, however, officials seem to have plenty of time on their hands to enable them to

deal with petty details, judging by a recent prosecution quoted by the *Estate Magazine*.

AN ex-Service man, employed as a farm labourer, sowed canary seed on three roods of land, being under the impression, as was I, that one could grow what one liked on less than an acre without interference. Apparently officialdom took a serious view of the matter, and made two attempts to scythe down the prohibited crops and plough the land in July, but on both occasions they were obstructed by the canary seed-grower, who resented seeing a flourishing crop destroyed at a time of the year when nothing could be sown to replace it. For this disgraceful flouting of local authority he was fined a total of £307 16s. or 12 months' imprisonment. This will teach the canary-seed-growing ex-Service man something about the special brand of freedom for which he has been fighting.

I realise now how lucky I am to be still writing *Notes for COUNTRY LIFE*, since last year I grew some sunflowers for the poultry on a three-rood plot and, if one is sentenced to twelve months' imprisonment for a tiny grain like a canary seed, in equity one ought to get a life sentence for a big aggressive thing like a sunflower.

## OLD WATER-MILLS OF SURREY

Written and Illustrated by J. D. U. WARD



RICKFORD MILL, NEAR WORPLESDON

OLD water-mills are a peaceful, placid subject, but I doubt whether the mills of Surrey should be specially commended as an "escape study" for anyone mentally sick of strife. Surrey mills seem to have played an ominous part in history. The late Donald Maxwell wrote: "Up till the time when Henry Reve established a mill in 1554 at Rotherhithe, in Surrey, all our gunpowder came from abroad," and he also observed that a century later the Parliamentary control of the powder mills at Godstone and Chilworth in Surrey during the Civil War "did more than anything else to turn the tide of battle against the Royalist forces."

The Godstone and Chilworth mills belonged to the Evelyns, and some of Mr. Eric Parker's words, written almost 40 years ago, in *Highways and Byways of Surrey*, may be quoted:—

George Evelyn (grandfather of a more famous grandson, John Evelyn of Wotton) and John, his son, were first licensed in 1589 to dig saltpetre in Great Britain and Ireland, and set up their first powder-mills on the little Hogsmill River, which joins the Thames at Kingston.

The famous John Evelyn wrote to Aubrey:

Not far from my brother's house, upon the streams and ponds, since filled up and drained, stood formerly many powder-mills, erected by my ancestors, who were the very first who brought that invention into England; before which we had all our gunpowder out of Flanders.

Soon the business spread to the more southerly parts of the county: on Chilworth Aubrey wrote:—

In this little romancy vale are sixteen powder-mills erected—'tis a little commonwealth of powder-makers who are as black as Negroes!

Later, some of the powder-mills were converted into paper-mills, where bank-notes were made, and the combination of gunpowder and bank-notes excited the special wrath of the easily wrathful Cobbett. He penned a long and eloquent tirade in which "a scene of innocence and happiness," complete with nightingales, was contrasted with "two of the most damnable inventions that ever sprang from man under the influence of the devil!"

When Mr. Parker was writing, the Chilworth mills were making cordite. But I suspect that the last of the Hogsmill powder-mills had even then ceased to make explosives. Last summer I searched along some stretches of the stream on both sides of Malden but found nothing. An elderly working man said that he "knew nothing of no mills of no kind", and he'd lived here all his life—so I understood that if there were indeed any mills they had no business to be there.



But then in Ewell I met another man who said, "Ah yes, the powder-mills. They were out in the fields: they've been gone a long time now." Cycling along a road bordered by the alder trees beloved of gunpowder makers, I saw a group of buildings painted black, with white window-frames, which accorded with an ancient guide-book's description of the powder manufactory, but they were quite near the highway and consisted largely of corrugated iron, so I decided that these could not be the old mills.

Of course, past wars might also be recalled by the hammer ponds of Surrey, not so far from Chilworth. But the days of Surrey's gun-founding were indeed long ago, and without survival to this century. One 20th-century writer comments on the fact that the water-power of a mill at Abinger Hammer, whence came cannon which had helped to rout the Armada, was working a sausage-machine when he visited it. A few miles away at Wotton were the first mills in England for casting, hammering and making wire of brass. Evelyn wrote on the subject to Aubrey:

First they drew the wire by men sitting harnessed in certain swings, taking hold of the brass thongs fitted to the holes, with pincers fastened to a girdle which went about them, and then with stretching forth their feet against a stump, they shot their bodies from it, closing with the plate again; but afterwards this was quite left off and the effect performed by an *ingenio* brought out of Sweden.

Another wire-mill at Felbridge is supposed to have turned out nails for use in the building of St. Paul's Cathedral, and Dunsfold has contested Lamberhurst's claim to be the source of the cathedral's iron railings.

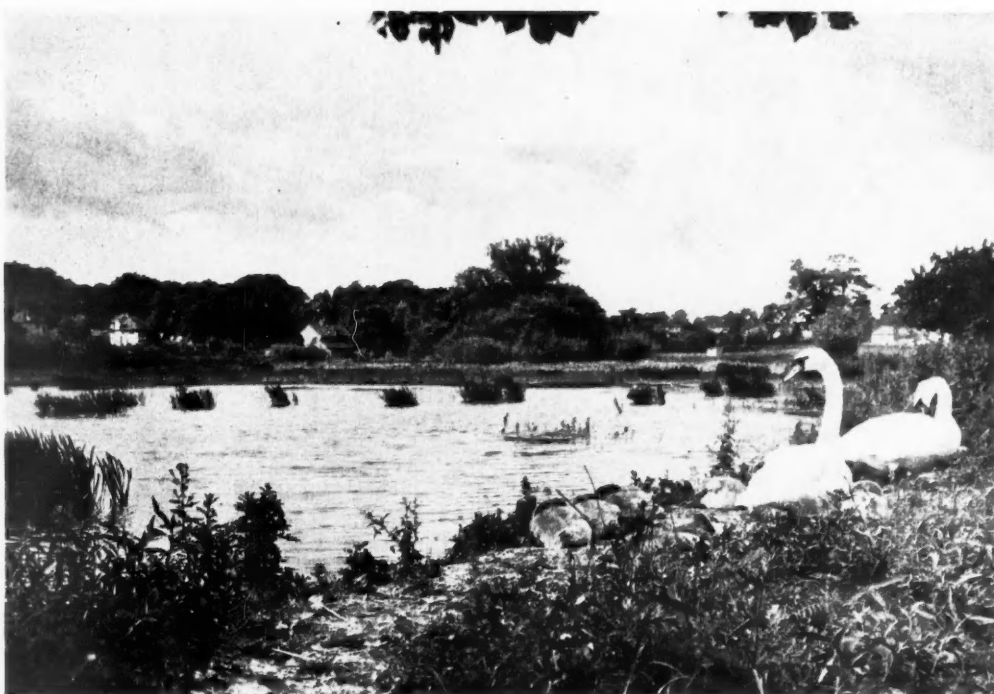
It was at no great distance from Dunsfold that I once watched deerskins being dressed at a mill, operated by water, at Godalming. These deerskins yielded glove leather. The making of vellum and parchment from calf and other skins was among the industries of the northern Surrey water-mills on the edge of London.

The mills of the Wandle and other suburban brooks are full of interest. At Morden, where there used to be a snuff-mill (there were several others elsewhere in Surrey), I found the brass plate of a "Tobacco Manufacturer" still on the roadside front of the old mill's bombed remains, though no snuff is now ground there. In the failing light of evening I took a snapshot of the mill-pond. An enquiry about some ruins a little farther upstream received the answer that there had been another mill—a flock-mill.

It was a Wandle mill, run by Huguenots at Wandsworth, that used to produce the scarlet hats of cardinals, and there have been comments on the irony of the Roman purchase of



EVENING AT CASTLE MILL, NEAR DORKING. (Below) SWANS AND CYGNETS BY FETCHAM MILL-POND, JUST OUTSIDE LEATHERHEAD



hats from men who were refugees from Roman persecution. Incidentally, Voltaire, during his absence from France from 1726 to 1729, was for a time the guest of Sir Edward Fawkner, a scarlet dyer, at Wandsworth. There were also Brazil or red dye mills at Carchalton and Wimbledon, and dyeing and fulling were, of course, among the functions of William Morris's famous mills at Merton Priory. Indeed, fulling and dyeing were major industries of the Wandle, but there were also felt-making and calico-printing mills, paper-mills and copper-mills, and, of course, corn-mills.

However indifferent "progressive-minded" people may be, I think that the passing of the old water-mills is to be regretted. A fine old weather-boarded corn-mill (illustrated by Donald Maxwell) on the Hogsmill River at Kingston has gone within the last 25 years, and many of the Surrey water-mills are now in that state of disuse which is too often the prelude to ruin or clearance. Such mills as those at Cobham (said to be 13th-century but the present buildings seem to be barely 200 years old) and Dorking (both the Castle Mill and Pippbrook Mill) seem too pleasant to lose.

Some of the more modern mills are



THE WEATHER-BOARDED CORN-MILL NEAR THE ABBEY RUINS AT NEWARK, CLOSE TO RIPLEY

much less attractive to the eye, yet even they are happy in their surroundings: for example, Ockham Mill near Ripley and Stoke Mill just outside Guildford. Few people would call Stoke Mill beautiful in itself, nor are its surroundings exactly picturesque, but the building reflects well in the water, and the scene when I happened to view it was completed by a large barge such as Constable would have loved. The mill itself is an interesting example of 19th-century architecture, and a passer-by, overlooking the river, might be forgiven if he mistook it for an unusually large Nonconformist Chapel. I suspect that Mr. John Betjeman might find as much merit in it as others would see in the earlier and more famous mill on the other side of Guildford, at Shalford. Shalford Mill, with its black weather-boards and its fish-scale tiles, is now owned by the National Trust and let as a private residence.

Mill-into-house is naturally a favourite metamorphosis, especially within 50 miles of London. The old mill-house at Westcott is particularly charming. The "next-door" Rookery Mill is also a private house. "Perhaps the two most beautifully-placed mills in Surrey" was the description, in a 40-year-old guide book, of the Rookery and the near-by Milton Court mills. Of the latter Grant Allen wrote:

The best view of all (is) to be had from the bridge hard by the mill-house, a bridge thickly covered with glossy green ivy, where one can take in at a single glance the idle mill-wheel, the water from the open sluice rushing and roaring over the stones below, the rank vegetation of cow-parsnip and butter-bur that chokes the margin, the pond and islets where the swans are nesting, and the big trees that frame in the whole with their over-hanging arch of summer greenery.

Now the mill is dismantled: both the mill-pond and the picturesque cottage, with its great ivy-grown chimney, are still there, but a great cavity and a few large beams are all that remain of the mill and its works.

That Dorking-Guildford-Chiddingfold-Farnham part of Surrey, which includes such places as Westcott and Wootton, Abinger, Gomshall, Chilworth and Shalford, is famous for its beauty, but a pleasant old mill-house, now part farm, part inn or coffee-house, may be found in quite another corner—at Thorpe, near Chertsey. In 1908 Mr. Eric Parker numbered little-known Thorpe among the three or four most beautiful villages in Surrey. When I was there a few weeks ago I commented that it seemed unspoilt and that there appeared to be little new building. "Oh, no," was the reply, "there was not likely to be much building, for this was part of the Green Belt."

A medley of pleasant memories remains from the two or three days spent cycling round a few of the Surrey mills. The lovely mill-pond at Fetcham outside Leatherhead, with its coots and moorhens and the swans with a family of cygnets; the exceptionally handsome old weather-boarded corn-mill near the abbey ruins at Newark, close to Ripley; and Rickford Mill near Worplesdon—perhaps ordinary enough in itself but happily framed by trees and water-lilies and a cumulus cloud. I remember several cress beds (nearly always pleasant to look upon: Ruskin recorded how the "cresset

Ewell, near the site of the famous palace of Nonsuch, and I remember the black mill at Byfleet.

And then two or three hours in the library with half a dozen books: what historic and literary associations! Nonsuch, Evelyn and Voltaire have been mentioned, but here were the willows in Sir John Millais's *Death of Ophelia*, and here was Nelson fishing in the mill-stream; near this mill Malthus was born, and near that lived John Donne, when in disgrace for having secretly married his master's 16-year-old niece. And now, at Fetcham, I was passing the inn kept by Skelton's Elinour Rumming.

So many strands of history were woven through the mills and the mill-streams. There was a reference to the "unhappy Wandle, formerly the best trout-stream in the south of England"—and then I learnt that even by 1829 the Wandle was turning 40 mills of different kinds, and

The first railway line in England was projected in 1802, for the purpose of carrying the produce of these mills to London—it was extended as far as Croydon, and was very successful for many years, the trucks being, of course, drawn by horses.

Then there was mention of "the quaint old Celtic title of the Pipbrook": in fact, the very names of the rivers proved to be stored with interest. I used to think that Molesey was derived from the Mole, and Wandsworth from the Wandle, but the authorities asserted that the river names were probably back formations from the places. The Hogsmill River was not directly swinish but commemorated an early miller named Hogg; Wey was essentially the same as Wye; and what English stream has a lovelier name than Tillingbourne?

Superior persons may dismiss Surrey as an "overworked" county, or they may say it is "fly-blown" topographically, but to those who would have another view I commend a pilgrimage of mill-streams and water-mills—not a quarter of which have been mentioned here.



SUNLIGHT AND SHADOW MAKE FLAY WITH SHALFORD MILL, ON THE WEY, SOUTH OF GUILDFORD



# MOHAWKS OF THE WOODS

By J. WENTWORTH DAY

THE park is old, gleaming with running brooks. Its woods stand massed and misty in spring or iron blue in winter, woods planted by old Sir Thomas Day in Stuart times. In those woods, among great oaks whose ancestral acorns were dropped by Saxon oaks that saw the horned midnight chase of Herne the Hunter after Norman buck, when this ancient estate was first carved as a purpresture from the Royal Forest of Windsor; there dwell the English popinjays, as gay and gaudy of dress, as cavalier in manner, as any Georgian Mohawk or Hawkabite, but with as black a roll of sins writ against their names.

If you go up into Sandylees, the old wood of oak and hazel and bracken, the wood that lies beside the high rabbit warren on a little fold of upland, the wood where they trapped a monstrous poaching cat that weighed 17 lb., the wood where foxes lie warm in sunny corners and woodcock sit close to the ground, their faces to the sun, their feathers blending all too perfectly with dead fern and mottled leaf, up in that old wood you will be greeted by the harsh scream of jays, the watchman's rattle of magpies.

These are the wicked popinjays. Their crimes are heinous, their sins enormous, their cruelties beyond belief—but though I mourn the young birds that they kill in the nest, the eggs that they suck, the peas and cherries that they devour, I would not shoot the last jay if he sat before me, flamboyant and defiant on a branch. And though the tale of the magpie's sins is near as long I could not lift my gun against the last of his race. They are too English, too ancient, too full of colour and impudence, these twin popinjays of the old woods. Their lineage goes too far back in English history. Their roots strike too deeply into dim echoes of Saxon forests and Norman chase.

They are natives, not foreigners, unlike that other cold-blooded killer of young birds, the little owl. That grey-and-white-mottled ball of feathers with the yellow unblinking eye of malevolence was brought here no more than a bare eighty years ago by Lord Lilford. He, good naturalist though he was, little realised the scourge that would arise among the small birds of English woods when he imported the first few pairs somewhere in the 'sixties and turned them loose in his wild park at Lilford, where the Ouse waters the wet meadows of Northamptonshire. To-day they are a scourge and pest in every English parish.

I can find little in my heart to excuse them, but I can find some practical excuse for the magpie, less for the jay. For magpies will kill rats. Few people know that. When they do kill a rat they pick his brains out and leave the rest. Like jays, they kill many mice, but

whereas the jay invariably skins a mouse before eating it, the magpie will sometimes bolt it whole, skin and all. Even so, their twin tale of dead mice and rats does not counter their wickedness among the eggs of game-birds and song-birds, their wholesale slaughter of nestlings. A jay will clear a complete nest of young blackbirds or thrushes in five or ten minutes.

A magpie will not only kill young pheasants; Mr. Mortimer Batten has actually seen them attack a full-grown hen grouse with her brood of young. I have seen them feeding on dead sheep and lambs on the Welsh hills and I would give no sick lamb a chance against half a dozen of them if it lay defenceless on a lonely hillside.

When, at Ockwells, in Berkshire, I go into Spring Pond covert, which lies in the park near the house, bosoming like jewels those two or three little carp ponds whence they dug the clay to make the bricks with which they started to build that ancient home in 1422, I see, high in the ragged oaks, a magpie's nest. They are there and in those other home coverts of Big Thrift and Little Thrift, names that please me since they, too, are as old as the house. The nest bulks huge in the tree-tops. Great structures of sticks cunningly founded in the branches, built to withstand gales, defy small boys and defeat the egg-stealing beaks of carrion crow, rook and jackdaw. That is why there is a roof of twigs over each nest. And there is a back door and a front door to the nest beneath that roof. So the mother bird can sit safely on her eggs, her beak and eyes peering out of the front door, her long, lustrous tail of metallic blue and white sticking out of the back door and a roof above her back.

Probably the only time when jays and magpies easily fall victims to the keeper's gun is during the nesting season; for then you can riddle the magpie's nest with a charge of shot. And you can shoot the young jays as they squall and clamour in fidgeting family groups in the tops of young firs. I once killed five at one shot after the garden had been pillaged of its young peas. That usually happens when the mother bird is either feeding the young, or, as I guess, reading them a vociferous lesson in the arts of early aviation.

Magpies, they say, pair for life, but if you shoot the hen bird while she has a nest full of eggs, the cock bird will produce another wife by the next morning. She takes over nest, eggs and husband all as a going concern. And if she, too, should happen to meet an early end, another wife will turn up the next day. Indeed, Mr. Thomas Speedy, the Scottish naturalist, once recorded that he shot six hen magpies from the same nest on six mornings running; he



W. J. C. Murray

**"TOO FULL OF COLOUR AND IMPUDENCE" TO MERIT DEATH: A FLEDGLING MAGPIE**

added that on the second morning, after he had slain the original hen bird, there were no fewer than half a dozen eager spinsters clamouring round the nest begging the cock bird to let them take over the ready-made home and family.

That is another peculiarity of magpies. They will return again and again to the same nesting spot, although, year after year, birds may have been shot there. Once they have made up their minds to stick to a certain place, it may be a tree, a valley or a wood, they come back to it.

To-day, there are far too many jays and magpies all over England. That is because for six or seven years there has been no game preserving and no gamekeepers. Gamekeepers, gardeners and farmers are their principal enemies, but of the three the gamekeeper is the only man who really wages effective war.

There is another bird of the woodland which strikes terror into small birds—the great grey shrike, the "butcher" bird in village language. He turns up sometimes in spring, frequently in autumn, and mainly only in the eastern parts of England and Scotland. A bold, aggressive bird with a grey back, black-and-white barred wings and tail, who sings rather like a starling and is more than nine inches in length.

Walk through the woods and you will find on a thorn bush the butcher bird's larder. There they are—small birds, mice, moths, beetles, grasshoppers, all firmly stuck on the spikes of the thorn. I have even seen the carcasses of moles, which had been skinned by the mole-catcher and thrown aside, impaled on the thorns of the larder. The butcher bird

usually takes up his perch on a bare branch or the top of a tall bush where he can watch for danger or dart like an arrow on his selected prey.

Two inches shorter in body, and much commoner in Southern England is the red-backed shrike, which turns up regularly every summer and breeds here, and the habits of which are the same as those of its big, grey brother.

But these are birds of which, like the jay and the magpie, a few are enough. The woods would be poorer were there none of any of them. I should take no pleasure in my occasional walks through those ancient woods of Ockwells were there none of them to lighten the glades or sound their warnings from hidden thickets.

As you go through the meadows by that lucent stream, full of watercress and quick, shining runs, of deep pools with a great bed of bordering reeds, which they call Smith's Rushes (and it was there, alas, that in 1938 a keeper shot a bittern for no better reason than that he did not know what it was), if you walk up the bank of that quick, shy brook which they call prettily, Lilybrook, since it runs through the fields of the dower house of Ockwells, old Lilybrook Manor, which has still its great walled, grass-grown tilting yard, you will always, at a low, wet place of shallows put up a magpie. That is because the village boys fish there. They cast out their pathetic little roach, their tiny perch to die among the grasses. And the magpies come down and eat them. Which is something that few people know. So should you ever go a-fishing, never leave your catch, whether trout or coarse fish, where a magpie's eye can spy it.



**"A JAY WILL CLEAR A COMPLETE NEST OF YOUNG BLACKBIRDS OR THRUSHES IN FIVE OR TEN MINUTES"**

## GREAT MOMENTS IN ATHLETICS—V

## THE ART OF HURDLING

By LIEUT.-COL. F. A. M. WEBSTER

WHEN hurdle races were held at Eton College in the first quarter of the 19th century they provided a combined test of running and jumping ability.

The idea, in those days, was to make speed between fences and to ensure safety by jumping well clear of each obstacle. That meant landing fairly and squarely on both feet after taking each hurdle, and, consequently, a dead stop before a boy could again get into his running. But the application of mechanics to the hurdler's art soon followed, and men sailed over their fences trunk almost upright, leading leg tucked up well in front and shin parallel to the top rail of the hurdle, with the rear leg trailing. They looked "pretty" but, to quote Kipling:—The Devil whispered behind the leaves, "It's pretty, but is it Art?"

The "devil" did not think so, and the particular "devil" in question was A. C. M. Croome, the great Oxonian, who achieved Blues for athletics and cricket and was also a distinguished golfer. He held the theory that hurdlers who looked pretty hurdled the wrong way, and his theory it was that put the punch into the modern hurdlers' devastating headlong rush, with every hurdle doing duty as a winning-post.

Croome's perfectly logical conclusions, after studying style and the event exhaustively, were that the bent-leg form was bad—firstly because the upright torso offered too great a surface to wind-resistance, and, therefore, reduced the speed of the athlete; and secondly because, in his opinion, very few men were supple enough in the hip and knee joints to lift the foot to the leading leg up to the level of the crutch. For every inch the ankle was below that level, so many inches higher was it necessary for the hurdler to rise from the ground in affecting the clearance of each of the ten hurdles. This, of course, constituted an unnecessary waste of time. Croome also held that if a "bent-legger" did tap timber he would be bowled right over and put clean out of the race.

In support of his new straight-leg style he argued that, in his way of hurdling, the seat of the athlete's shorts cleared the top rail of the hurdle by an appreciably small margin, that the forcing of the body forward above the thigh of the rising leg drove the leading foot more quickly to ground after hurdle clearance and



LORD BURGHEY (*SECOND FROM RIGHT*), WINNER OF THE 400 METRES OLYMPIC HURDLES IN 1928 AND OF A NUMBER OF BRITISH TITLES

that, should the hurdler hit the top rail in rising to it, the heel of his shoe would push the barrier over. The straight-legged hurdler would, therefore, not be put out of the race.

When demonstrating this principle upon one occasion the knee of Croome's leading leg made such violent contact with his own out-thrust chin that he knocked himself out and came to all mixed up with the fragments of the next fence.

Croome was also of the opinion that hurdling success requires more brains, patience and courage than any other athletic event; and certainly the attainments of the four hurdlers who started in the Oxford and Cambridge race of 1886, which Croome won in 16.4 seconds, seemed to prove his contention.

The quartet comprised A. C. M. Croome, and H. T. Bowlby, of Oxford, and J. Le Fleming and J. R. Orford, of Cambridge. In their four

persons there were combined: one rowing, one cricket, one rugby football, two hammer-throwing and four hurdling Blues; the presidents of both athletics clubs; two county cricketers; one champion figure-skater; two holders of National Swimming Association badges; two scratch golfers; four superb waltzers; one Fellow of a most exclusive college; one university prizeman; and four holders of scholarships or exhibitions, while the names of the four had appeared on seven occasions in some first-class honours list.

Lord Burghley, a fine hurdler, and one of the outstanding personalities of modern athletics, exemplified Croome's dictum. Burghley was not heard of as an athlete at Eton, but when he went up to Magdalene College, Cambridge, in the autumn of 1923, he took to hurdling as a duck takes to water. In 1925 he began an extraordinary run of inter-university successes, winning both the 120 yards high and the 220 yards low hurdles from 1925 to 1927 inclusive. His best times were 15.5 seconds, which equalled the then existing high-hurdles record, and 24.8 seconds for a new low-hurdles record. He was honorary secretary and president of the C.U.A.C.

Meanwhile, other honours were falling fast upon him. He was invincible for Cambridge against the English team and set up new English records for 220 yards of 24.7 seconds, 120 yards hurdles of 14.9 seconds and 440 yards hurdles of 53.8 seconds. Both the two last-named records were made on the same afternoon.

Perhaps the only thing that kept Burghley out of the world's record class of high hurdlers was traceable to an accident in youth which possibly prevented him from throwing his leading leg directly forward over the high fences. At 440 yards and 400 metres over 3-ft. hurdles, however, he was unsurpassed in his generation.

At the Olympic games held at Amsterdam in 1928, Burghley set the seal on a great athletic career when he won the 400 metres hurdles title. He had already won the English 440 yds. title in 54 seconds, but the Americans Taylor and Gibson both had world's records to their credit. In the semi-finals Burghley had seemed off form, running third to Taylor and Cuhel, whom the U.S.A. coaches fancied as the potential winner and runner-up. In the final Cuhel had the inside berth and Burghley was badly drawn on the outside, from which position he could not see his rivals until the race was half run, because of the staggered start.

For this reason, and contrary to his custom,



R. M. N. TISDALL (*IRELAND*) BREASTING THE TAPE IN THE 400 METRES HURDLES AT THE OLYMPIC GAMES HELD AT LOS ANGELES IN 1932



he elected to treat each hurdle as a winning-post. He came into the home stretch dead level with the two dangerous Americans, chopped his stride deliberately to make sure of taking the tenth hurdle, and won from Cuhel and Taylor by the barest inches in 53.4 seconds, a new Olympic record.

Robert Morton Newburgh Tisdall, known more familiarly to his many friends as Bob, was athletically, and in many other ways, an amazing person. He hailed from Tipperary and when he was a small boy his mother took him to a circus. So fascinated was he that he promptly decided to adopt acrobatics as his profession. For weeks after he spent much time turning cart-wheels, walking on his hands and using the branches of trees in place of a trapeze.

In his first year at Shrewsbury, he did well in a number of junior events, but, at fourteen years of age, the fascination of hurdling had already gripped him. In the following year he entered for both the junior and senior hurdles. He managed to reach the finals of both, but he won neither, and did not forget that lesson. Altogether he won seven different events at Shrewsbury.

Tisdall went up to Cambridge in October, 1927, and my recollection is that he started off with some amazingly good shot-putting performances in the Freshmen's sports of 1928, but confined his attention to that event. In 1929, however, he won the inter-varsity 220 yards low hurdles, and in 1930 he won both hurdle races, and beat 40 feet for second place with the shot.

In 1931 Tisdall crowned his Cambridge career with an astounding performance in the inter-varsity sports. He was president of the C.U.A.C. that year and found himself in an embarrassing position. Upon his shoulders rested the onus of selecting the team to meet Oxford and of awarding the full and the half Blues. Not unnaturally, he was diffident about selecting himself to represent Cambridge in four out of the eight events that then comprised the programme. If he did so he would inevitably deprive three of his friends of a coveted honour.

On waking on the morning of the sports, Tisdall had been greeted by the icy blast of a real March wind. He did not feel too happy about the prospects of the day, for failure, after selecting himself for four events, was a possibility too horrible to contemplate.

His first event was the high hurdles, which he won comfortably in 15.5 seconds. This race was followed immediately by the long-jump and the shot-put, scheduled to take place simultaneously. This made things rather awkward for the C.U.A.C. president, since it would be difficult to concentrate sufficiently on either event.

In the second round of the shot-put, however, Tisdall reached 40 feet 8 inches, which he regarded as good enough to win. So he stood on that measurement and devoted himself exclusively to the long jump. He had already jumped twice, but on each occasion had overstepped the take-off board. Now, Lang, of Oxford, registering 22 feet 6 inches, was half a foot ahead of the Cambridge second string.

Tisdall was furious with himself for not having practised his approach and take-off more sedulously and, for the first time that day, felt a warm glow steal over him. Down the cinder path he came, running very fast, felt his spikes bite fairly into the take-off board, and soared up and out in what he knew was going to be a good jump. It was, for it was just over 23 feet.

There was still the quarter-mile to run. Tisdall drew the second lane and was pleased. He would now have two men out ahead upon whom he could keep an eye. In addition, the wide lane inside was much worn by the many feet that had already passed over it. He made a terribly slow start but never lost touch with his field, caught it, and forged ahead to break the tape in 51 seconds.

In the next instant his feet were swept from under him and he was carried from the arena upon the shoulders of wildly cheering past and present Blues, some of whom were also British and Olympic champions. This is a tribute but rarely paid to an athlete at the inter-varsity sports, even if, like Tisdall, he has

taken part during his varsity career in nine events at the Oxford and Cambridge sports and won seven of them.

To have won four events within the space of a single short winter's afternoon would have been no small achievement with much smaller performances in the old rough-and-ready days of inter-varsity contests. It was simply superb in these modern days of scientific specialisation.

In 1932 Tisdall duly achieved the great ambition of every athlete when he won the 400 metres hurdles at the Olympic games held at Los Angeles. The final took place on August 1, Areskoug, of Sweden, drew the inside berth, then came Facelli, Italy; Tisdall, Ireland; Hardin, U.S.A.; Burghley, Great Britain; and Morgan Taylor, U.S.A. It was extremely difficult to see which man was leading in the staggered lanes, but the impression created was that Tisdall got his leading foot to ground slightly in advance of the rest of the field over each fence in even the earliest stages of the race. As the field swung into the straight-away it was seen that Bob Tisdall had a clear lead and complete command of the situation.

They rose to the last hurdle with Tisdall clear, Morgan Taylor next, and Burghley just a shade ahead of Hardin. Then the unexpected happened, for the Irishman, in his final head-long rush for the tape, brought down the last fence; his stride was broken; he stumbled on for five or six yards before he regained it; and, meanwhile, Hardin, Taylor and Burghley were closing up in a fierce finishing dash. But so far was Tisdall ahead that he managed to break the tape less than a yard ahead of Hardin, with Taylor third and Burghley fourth. Tisdall's time was 51.8 seconds, but it was not accepted as a world's record because he had knocked down that last hurdle.

These articles are taken from Lieut.-Col. Webster's book *Great Moments in Athletics* to be published shortly by COUNTRY LIFE, price 15s. Previous articles have appeared on December 27, 1946, and January 17, March 28 and May 9, 1947.

## A COUNTRYWOMAN'S NOTES

By EILUNED LEWIS

TO say that in order to understand this country it is necessary to leave it is obviously foolish; no real countryman would tolerate such an absurd assumption. Yet there is this about it: the returning traveller sees with fresh eyes some features of the English landscape which up till then may have been taken for granted. Homeward bound from India after a visit of some months and steaming up Southampton Water I felt that I understood for the first time the reason why the people of this island are not given to sudden violent emotions; why they have produced the world's best school of water-colour painting; and why Englishwomen—unlike their sisters in tropical lands—dress in colours which resemble as closely as possible their own ploughed fields and quiet hedges.

Our ship landed on a so-called sunny day, "in a summer season when soft was the sonne," yet to our eyes there appeared a luminous veil round each object—church tower, red-roofed cottage and budding elm. The great procession of English water-colourists, from Cox and Cotman, from the heavenly Constable sketches and early Turners down to the painstaking efforts of maiden aunts, hung in the bedrooms of country houses, is explained by that shimmering atmosphere, that exquisite chemistry compounded of fitful gleam and passing shower.

SOUTHAMPTON WATER, by the way, should always be chosen for the first view of this country. The Clyde, although magnificent, has too unreliable a climate; Mersey mouth is better forgotten; but the wooded shores of the Solent and the green lawns of the Isle of Wight, the contiguity of castle, farm and hamlet give an impression of England which may be idyllic compared with some of the grimmer portions of this island, but is certainly very welcoming. The effect on our ship's passengers was remarkable. Many of them were Australians, seeing this

country for the first time; some of them were coming home (for England is Home to all Australians) after an absence of many years. One of these—a Scot, needless to say—broke into fervent speech at the sight of those pleasant Hampshire fields. "Man, you see all that green?" he exclaimed to the youth beside him. "You'll see that nowhere else in the world except England, Scotland and Ireland. And the further north you go, the greener it gets!"

\* \* \*

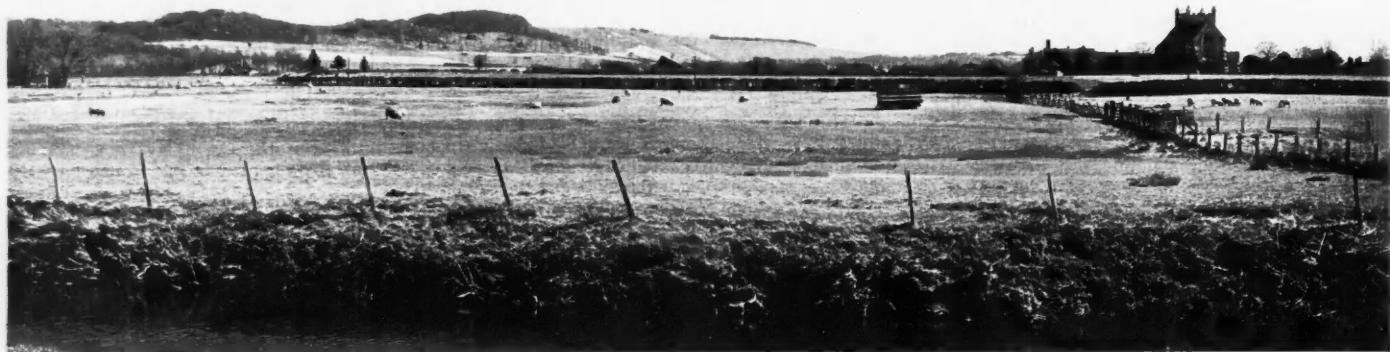
OUR shipload of passengers from "Down Under" (we had joined them at Bombay) was interesting. There were so many of them, and their appetites were so good that there were moments when our hearts misgave us at the thought of so many hearty, hungry people rapidly approaching our lean shores. I ventured to express something of this fear to the comfortable lady seated beside me at table, but she replied imperturbably that she had arranged for a regular service of food parcels to reach her from Sydney. She herself, grey-haired and already a great-aunt, was going "home" for the first time in her life to visit relatives in East Anglia, and intended staying for a year. The rest of our table was an amusing cross-section. It included two Glasgow engineers, one of whom had become an Australian citizen, but both retaining their native speech after a sojourn of many years; the merry little wife of a professional motor-cyclist from Sydney; a spirited lady who ran a business of her own in Glamorgan and said she was "English and proud of it"; and a pretty Australian bride. There were a great many brides on board, and very pleasant they looked, coming to wed British sailors and soldiers. But I hope an equal number of English girls are marrying Australians in order to square the account.

THE "Brides from the Bush" carried an air of adventure which was very taking. Another youthful bride whom I saw a few weeks later had all the opposite charm of seclusion; nor could any two backgrounds be more different than the deck of a civil transport and the flowery mountainside above a Swiss lake.

The village street up which this "sweet stay-at-home" walked with her bridegroom had everything necessary for a musical comedy background. (If the sturdy, sensible inhabitants did not belie the idea, Switzerland would be altogether too good to be true in present-day Europe.) There were the freshly painted chalets, the lilac and wistaria and the sunshine; the young green of the terraced vineyards sloping down to the lake and the bridal party wending its way upwards to the inn for the wedding feast. "Wending" is the appropriate word for so romantic an occasion, but they were actually striding uphill like honest *gens du pays*, the bride lifting her white frock out of the dust, the men all sporting buttonholes of narcissi and exchanging jocular remarks.

\* \* \*

THE flower-decked wedding breakfast was spread in a room below the balcony and the maidservant of the inn ran to and fro with dishes. While the happy pair were being toasted downstairs we feasted on roast chicken, white bread, excellent cheese, and a bottle of red wine. From distant meadows, thick with flowers, came the comforting tink-tonk of cow bells, and a garden-warbler spilt his little fountain of song among the cherry trees beside the inn. Lofty Alps towered on the horizon and but a few miles away lay the buzz and sophistication of a city. To anyone grown equally weary of austerity and cynicism that village street and those meadows half-way up the mountain, starry with blossom as the *fleurettes* of French tapestry, might well seem quiet perfection.



1.—WYE CHURCH AND COLLEGE, WITH WYE DOWN, FROM THE BANKS OF THE STOUR

## WYE COLLEGE, KENT

A FIFTH CENTENARY

By CHRISTOPHER HUSSEY

*Founded by Cardinal Kempe in 1447 as a College of Priests and Grammar School, the building became in 1892 the South-Eastern Agricultural College, now reconstructed as the Department of Agriculture and Horticulture of London University, and incorporating Swanley College*

**W**YE COLLEGE has, within a generation, become a name well known to all connected with agricultural education, and increasingly so to those who are not. But few, probably, have realised that this now famous institution inherited a building founded as a College five centuries ago, in which the tradition of teaching has survived almost continuously. Very appropriately the re-establishment of Wye College as the Department of Agriculture and Horticulture of London University, and incorporation with it of the Horticultural College of Swanley (destroyed by bombs in 1940) is being made the occasion on Friday, June 13, of commemorating the fifth centenary of the original foundation by Cardinal Kempe, Lord Chancellor to King Henry VI.

The little town of Wye lies some five miles from Ashford, just off the Canterbury road, in the fertile valley of the Stour that bisects the Downs. It is sheltered on the east by Wye Down, shown to be a place of high antiquity by the group of barrows which crown it. The narrow street climbing from the bridge, rebuilt in 1638, was described by

Harris (1719) as "formerly full of Inns, the gatehouses of which were standing within living memory," and now consists chiefly of little Georgian houses.

Church Street (Fig. 2) turning off it at right angles brings into view, beyond the remains of the Green, the odd, massive shape of the Church and the College's low red roofs clustered immediately to the east of it. These are now grouped round five quadrangles, which follow, in the local materials of brick, flint and ragstone, the character of University buildings, with the fields of the College estate immediately behind them. This consists of two farms, commercially operated, and a third area, recently acquired, to be developed as gardens for the new horticultural department, the country house to which it belonged being now converted to a hall of residence for women students.

One of the farm-houses has been made into a house for the Principal, Mr. Dunstan Skilbeck, thus releasing for communal use the rooms in the old quadrangle allotted for two hundred years to the

Master of the Grammar School. The recent overhaul of the buildings, necessitated by five years of disuse, occupation by the Army, and bomb-blast from near misses, has been supervised by Mr. Sidney Loweth, the County Architect, and has much improved the accommodation and planning as well as providing a collegiate dining-hall (in what was the gymnasium), additional bathrooms and sanitation, and regrouped the study-bedrooms for about 95 students.

Wye Church was originally cruciform, with a central tower and three chancels. But in 1685 the tower fell, destroying all the eastern part containing the tomb of Cardinal Kempe's parents and the chapels served by the collegiate priests. Harris, writing within memory of the event, described the chancel as having been "choir fashion well wainscotted and seated round. . . . I saw some statues and fragments of monuments." But in 1706 the debris had been cleared away, and the existing short apse and low blunt tower (Fig. 5) were erected. Thus only the nave remains of the church, probably built about 1400 by the Abbot of Battle, lord of the manor, and no doubt much beautified by Kempe.

The old quadrangle of the College of St. Gregory and St. Martin is the westernmost of those forming the present College. Permission for the foundation was given by royal licence dated 1431, and it was sufficiently advanced in 1447 for the staff to be appointed. They numbered a Master, six priests, two clerks, two choristers, and a Master of Grammar "that shal freely teche al that wol come to his techyng"—in the Founder's words, to the end that, as he set forth in the Statutes, "the art of grammar being the foundation of all liberal Arts and Sciences, its study may not be neglected for want of a Master, nor the sons of the poor by reason of its expense be debarred therefrom."

It consisted of buildings round three sides of a court, with a hall forming the east side, the west side closed by a wall containing a way through to the churchyard. Probably a timber pentice round the court formed a cloister. Detached some 60 ft. from the south-west corner was a single-storey building, some 15 by 40 ft., with finely cut door in its west end. A survey in 1553 describes the



2.—CHURCH STREET, WYE





3.—THE SOUTH FRONT OF THE COLLEGE AND THE GRAMMAR SCHOOL

College as "built 4 square, the overpart of timber, the nether part stone, saving the Hall of it which is all of stone, covered with slate," and comprising "a parlour 20 ft. square ceiled with old wainscot at the upper end of the Hall, a chamber over it of like size; the rest of the lodgings on that side little chambers above and beneath; at the end of the hall a kitchen, with the buttery, larder, pantry and other offices on that side; over them two large chambers, the one ceiled." Much of this recognisably survives. But then the survey adds "at the entry of the gate, on the right hand, a fair Chapel with seats and Altar of wainscot, and on the left hand the Porter's lodge." The position of this entry raises a problem involving the original purpose of the beautiful little detached building standing at the corner of the churchyard and college garden and known traditionally as the Old Grammar School (Fig. 6).

It has often been regarded as the domestic chapel. The fine quality of its west door, enriched with embattled cresting, and cusped windows set singly or in pairs, might substantiate this view. But it was for long a ruin and has been much altered, with an 18th-century hipped roof and the lower part of the windows bricked up. A curious feature is a lion's (?) head projecting from the quoins at the south-west angle. If it is the chapel referred to in the 1553 survey as on the right of the gate, then the lion's head might have been the corbel of a gate arch linking it to a porter's lodge that has disappeared, and giving into some kind of outer court. But there is still a doorway in the west wall of the quadrangle, opening into the churchyard—which was, of course, the direction that the priests usually required to go. Moreover, the three westernmost windows in the ground floor of the College's

south front (Fig. 3) are of single lights somewhat higher than the others, and there is a three-light west window round the corner, suggesting that they are those of a small domestic chapel. This would thus have lain to the right of the gate in the west wall of the quadrangle, as described in the survey. In that case the porter's lodge was in the north-west corner of it, and the detached building will have been the Grammar School from the outset. This is confirmed by the will (in the British Museum under "Wye") of William Sowrlls, Chaplain of the College, 1513, desiring "to be

buried in the churchyard before the door of the grammar school"—which opens from it. However, a survey of 1744 undoubtedly alludes to it, after enumerating the contents of the quadrangle, as "the School formerly the Chapel," though probably in error. It was about 1739 that the buildings had assumed their present appearance, Cardinal Kempe's timber-framed upper storey being then rebuilt in brick with sash windows. Inside the quadrangle a cloister is described (in 1794) as having been "pulled down about 50 years since and altered to several brick



4.—CLOISTERS (1739) AND HALL, LOOKING EAST



5.—THE WEST, ORIGINAL ENTRANCE, FRONT OF THE COLLEGE, with modern extensions to the left and the Queen Anne church tower

pillars and arches" (Fig. 4). With its hall in the east side (opposite the gateway), domestic chapel, chambers, parlour, Master's lodging, and timber framing above a stone ground floor, the building belonged to that type of chantry college of which so many were founded in the 15th century, with or without a secondary educational purpose. Not many, however, have materially survived, and few so near completely as Wye. Cobham, Kent (1370), later converted to an alms-house, is one; Tong, Shropshire (1410), recently described here, survives only in fragments. Ewelme, Oxfordshire, almost exactly contemporary, belongs to the much larger and better preserved class that were founded as alms-houses.

John Kempe (1380-1454) was second son of Thomas Kempe of Olantigh, a seat in Wye parish which the family had possessed since the days of Edward I. Though a priest he was always primarily a lawyer, and as Bishop, Archbishop successively of York and Canterbury, Cardinal, and twice Lord Chancellor, he was one of the leading politicians and administrators of Henry VI's reign. Among his fellow prelates were Chichele,

Waynflete and Beckington, all closely associated with educational foundations, and he himself was concerned in the building of the Divinity Schools at Oxford. But, beyond giving Merton College graduates preference in appointments to Wye College, he was not a direct benefactor to his University, concentrating his resources on this foundation in his home town, of which he evidently was very fond. A passage has already been quoted from the original text of his personal letter to the Abbot of Battle, proposing the foundation of the College and certain compensations to the Abbot as lord of the manor. Its language brings Kempe vividly before us, as he explains that his reasons were: "augmentation of the nomb'r of God's ministr' & s'vice in the Chirch of Wy; furthering enriching and profit of thair (the Abbot's and convent's) toune ther the which is like ellis bi process of tyme greetly to decreese as it semyth; and for so much of the said Archbishop that was boryn and broght forth withinne the said p'isshe, & wher also (lie) meny of the bodyys of his auncestors alyns and freends that be passed to God, the which he desirith especially to be prayyd for restyn,

purposith . . . to stablish a felaship of God's Ministrs . . ." The Statutes laid down the conduct of the fellowship in minute detail, how they were to have meals in common in the hall or parlour, as in a refectory, when scripture was to be read aloud and Latin spoken, unless any stranger should be a guest; the value of hospitality to guests (if at the first table two pence, if at the second one penny) and if a workman, for a week or more, the cost to come from the common purse; how games of dice and ball and "Summer Games" were forbidden; and how Fellows must not walk abroad alone "unless it is to the church or school." This last injunction would confirm the detached building being the schoolroom, which lay just outside the cloister.

At the Dissolution the College was given to Walter Bucler, secretary to Queen Katherine Parr; from him it passed through various hands, full record of which is lost, and appears to have belonged about 1610 to Sir William Monyns, of Waldershare. His and the arms of Twisden (his wife's) occur in the decoration of one of the rooms, and in a large fireback dated 1610 discovered in the old



7.—DOORWAY TO STAIRCASE IN NORTH CLOISTER

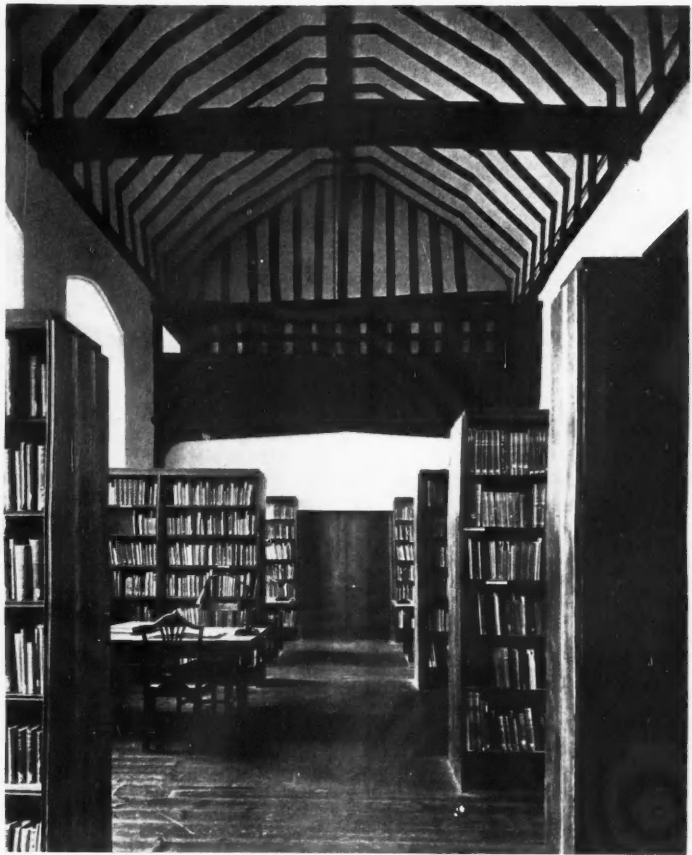
kitchen. The College had evidently been converted to a residence, and from that time dates an oak staircase in the north range set just inside a Gothic door from the cloister (Fig. 7). The newels were surmounted by figures of "ancient Britons" now standing on the floor of the old parlour (Fig. 10). This is at right angles to the north end of the hall, and contains a Bethesden marble fireplace, wainscot and enriched pilasters of this period or slightly earlier, with fine linenfold panels that date to before the Dissolution (Fig. 8). The 1553 survey refers to a square parlour "ceiled with old wainscot" in this position, so that the library was evidently formed at a later date by throwing the adjoining room or rooms into one.

Maintenance of the Grammar School was made a condition of the grant of the College to Bucler and, although there is some doubt whether he or his successors contributed to it, the School appears to have been continued after the Reformation by its former Master and then by his son—both apparently faithful



6.—CARDINAL KEMPE'S GRAMMAR SCHOOL





8.—LINENFOLD PANELS IN THE READING ROOM (Right) 9.—THE HALL, NOW THE LIBRARY, NORTH END

to the old religion—till 1595. In 1625 a new grant was made to one Robert Maxwell, who agreed to provide a Grammar Master. In 1708 Lady Joanna Thornhill, of Olantigh, bequeathed a sum to pay for both a master and mistress to live in the northern half of the buildings, and keep a boys' and a girls' free school there, "for the poorest sort of children," in addition, it seems, to the Grammar School in the separate building, where perhaps a fee was now charged. In 1724 the will of Sir George Wheler—antiquary, traveller (in the Near East) and cleric, who had bought Wye College and the ruins of Charing Palace—gave the southern half of the quadrangle for the Grammar Schoolmaster's use, besides providing for a Wye scholar to proceed to Lincoln College, Oxford. The rebuilding in brick of the upper storey and cloister—which gives such charming character to the quadrangle—followed these endowments. Both the Thornhill and the Grammar Schools were flourishing at the end of the 18th century, and again about 1840-50, when the old outbuildings adjoining the south-east corner of the quadrangle were reconstructed as a girls' schoolroom, the boys continuing to use the Hall. But by 1870 both were in low water, the buildings being leased in 1889 as a private school and in 1892 transferred by the Charity Commissioners to the County Councils of Kent and Surrey for an Agricultural College.

The credit for this singularly imaginative transformation is largely due to the first Chairman of the Governing Body, Mr. E. J. Halsey, and the Vice-chairman, Sir John Lennard, Bt., of the Surrey and Kent County Councils respectively; and the first Principal of the South-Eastern Agricultural College, Mr. Alfred Daniel Hall. To Sir Daniel himself, as he later became, is due the rapidity and success with which the Agricultural College built up a world-wide reputation.

Big extensions, including the present front quadrangle and entrance, adjoining the old College to the east, were made in 1914-15. In the recent alterations the old Hall has become the main library, and the mediæval domestic chapel in the south-west corner, formerly the Principal's drawing-room, the Senior Common Room.

Thus the five centuries of Wye College's existence, being commemorated to-day, are curious but continuous. Already its

former students since the second reformation are to be found in every Colony and Dominion as well as in a large number of foreign countries, working as administrators, plantation managers, farmers, and business men. While the Royal College at Cirencester is the oldest Agricultural College, Wye is perhaps even more widely known and, as has been shown, can claim actual seniority as a college to Eton and King's, which, with All Souls', are Wye's contemporaries.



10.—THE READING ROOM (PARLOUR) with Elizabethan wainscot and the "ancient Briton" figures originally on the staircase newels

## THE CITY REVISED

THE exercises of the imagination called for on the part of Londoners by successive plans for the City's reconstruction must by now have loosened up that faculty to a thoroughly pliable condition. The face of London, to which the epithet unchanging was commonly (though never accurately) applied, but which undeniably possessed many attributes of permanence, has become like nothing so much as one of those indiarubber faces one could buy and contort into any expression by manipulating it in one's fingers. The Royal Academy plans made the first face, the more advanced modern planners made another in the *Architectural Review*, then came the City Engineer's (1944), which the then Minister of Planning returned for further consideration. The latest, that of the consultants then appointed, Dr. C. H. Holden and Professor W. G. Holford, embodies features of its predecessors but is much more drastic and much more constructive. We must not tire of heroic conceptions, although it will certainly be encouraging when, out of all the visions and revisions, something more than a few hundreds of cottages get actually built. Only by going over the plans again and again will ideals, practical requirements, costs and material factors be gradually resolved with one another into the best attainable new city.

The Consultants' Plan, let it be said at once, takes us a long way forward towards this objective. It applies a reasoned and at the same time a creative modern conception to the actual problems confronting the City, and as such is the most constructively feasible proposal that has been hitherto advanced for London or any other closely built English city. The recommendations made for the lines of main thoroughfares and new open spaces, following or diverging from previous plans, are noteworthy, but it is its revolutionary yet reasoned and receptive moulding of the conception of a modern, and historical, commercial centre which constitutes its chief importance. This underlies and conditions the detailed pro-

posals for street lines and at the same time provides a practical basis for the evolution of a new kind of city architecture.

Planning in the past, deriving from Renaissance precedent, has conceived a city as a pattern of streets lined by continuous buildings interrupted only by important monuments. As land increased in value and demand for space grew, so the height of façades rose to the level sanctioned by successive Building Acts. The results have been the shutting out of daylight from the streets, the congestion of traffic and canalising of its noise, a monotonous skyline, and overcrowding of population in relation to street area. On the other hand, behind these façades, the backs of high buildings have been left virtually undesigned and, but for the fact that it was not worth-while to rebuild the old, low, properties on courts or back streets to the general level, would have produced solid blocks of buildings ventilated only by light-wells and containing far more people than channels of transport could cope with. Actually, the average height of buildings was found to be only four storeys above ground and one below,

in spite of the large number of high modern buildings; which leads the Consultants to observe ironically that working conditions in the City have owed much to those owners of older, smaller buildings which have conserved light and space for others.

Against a background of the County of London Plan, and of the material prospects of reconstruction (divided into a ten-year, and a thirty-year, term as from 1948), the Consultants begin their scheme with an analysis of accommodation in terms of floor space—the first time this has been attempted in England. This leads them to propose, as the standard plot ratio throughout, a normal capacity of floor space per building five times the size of the buildings area. This contrasts with a present maximum of 10.5 and an average over-all of 5.2, and would give 472,000 as the day-time working population. The effect of applying this form of density control would be to reduce the area of floor space round the Bank from 13.4 million sq. ft. to 9.8 million; and round St. Paul's from 8.0 to 7.6 million; but to increase it slightly elsewhere.

Having established the human density to be catered for, the Report turns to the shape of buildings. It suggests that the whole City should be regarded as a single "use-zone," thus eliminating the differential treatments previously recommended; and, largely through the new powers of compulsory acquisition, that blocks be redesigned and redeveloped as wholes. As for the means of controlling design: instead of the present limitation of sheer height to 80 ft., with an over-all height of 100 ft., they propose a total permissive height of 120 ft., provided that the angle of daylight from the cornice-level (or first set-back) of a building to the opposite pavement shall be not more than 56 degrees, with special ratios where historic buildings are involved.

The effect of these provisions would be to universalise a type of block at present represented by St. James's Park Underground and the Bank of England: blocks pyramidal in general outline but consisting actually in a series of stepped-back blocks and projections rising to full height only above the middle of the plot, or where facing open space. As long as the density ratio was not exceeded it would be open to the architect to shape his block in accordance with the angles of light, as he chose. Thus a virtually new type of city building would replace the type originally produced by the 1667 Act, applying to London the principle of the Zoning Law which revolutionised New York architecture some 25 years ago, just as Stuart London was rebuilt on the system then introduced from Holland. Few English precedents exist as yet for the architectural character of such buildings, and such as there



1.—ST. PAUL'S FROM THE NORTH-EAST, AS REVEALED BY THE PROPOSED NEW ST. MARTIN'S-LE-GRAND SQUARE. Drawing by Jasper Salwey



2.—THE PROPOSED NEW STREET PROLONGING LONDON WALL, AND INDICATING THE POSSIBLE NEW TYPE OF CITY BUILDINGS



are in many cases not inspiring (e.g., some of the newer blocks of flats at Westminster). But the possibilities are great, and schools of architecture should lose no time in exercising students in developing them.

Several of the sketch designs of street scenes made for the Report give some idea of the City's appearance when rebuilt on this system (e.g., Fig. 2).

The street plan involves more sweeping changes than the Corporation's version. Railway stations are conceived as eliminated during the period beginning 1957, though Blackfriars railway bridge would be retained for traffic (and the present road bridge removed). Large bridge-head places are attached to Blackfriars and London Bridges, and big traffic-circuses set at Gray's Inn Road, Holborn Circus, Ludgate Circus, the Bank, and St. Martin's-le-Grand, besides the new Square already proposed at Mansion House Station. The Bank Square envisages the removal of the Mansion House to an enclave formed round the Guildhall. The precinct of St. Paul's is pushed back to Paternoster Row and Carter Lane—its extent as originally envisaged by Wren. A stepped way south from St. Paul's to the river would be narrower than the vistas previously proposed there, though a pleasing touch is the recommendation, inherited from the R.A. Report, that ceremonial river processions to St. Paul's should by this means be restored. The line of the new way may have to be modified to avoid Mr. Silkin's chimney terminating the vista from Wren's south transept.

The by-passing system consists of new thoroughfares, double-decked for part of their courses, north and south of the City. The southern, from Blackfriars to Tower Bridge approach, scraps the Corporation's tentative

extension of the Embankment in favour of the Thames Street line. As property along the route is rebuilt, raised roadways on each side would be formed leaving the present street level for warehouse traffic only. The route passes to the north of Tower Hill, avoiding the bisection of this open space which was an objection to the earlier plan. The northern route, from the new

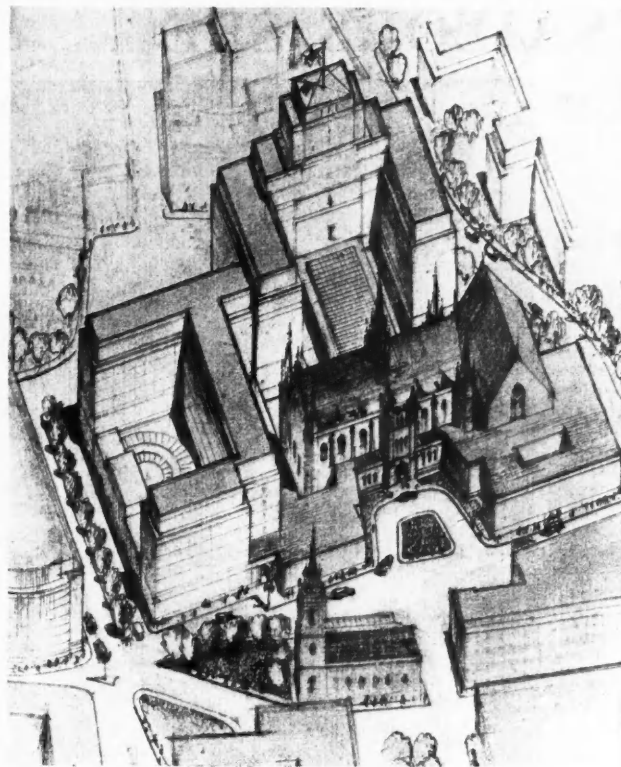
Gray's Inn roundabout, goes by Charles Street over Farringdon Road, thence skirting Finsbury Circus to the north and across the site of the south end of Liverpool Street Station (which it is assumed will, together with other City terminals, be removed outwards), linking up via Middlesex Street with Aldgate. A new inner distributive road is plotted from Ludgate Circus, passing between St. Bartholomew's Hospital and the G.P.O. and cutting through to a widened London Wall. A new low-level street links Gresham Street with Cannon Street (at the new Square) by passing under Cheapside at St. Mary le Bow Church (Fig. 4). Existing through routes are recommended to be widened.

A special section is devoted to car parking. Public car parks accommodating 3,150 cars are shown under new circuses and double-deck roads, and with lay-bys and other spaces, parking for a total of 4,520 is provided.

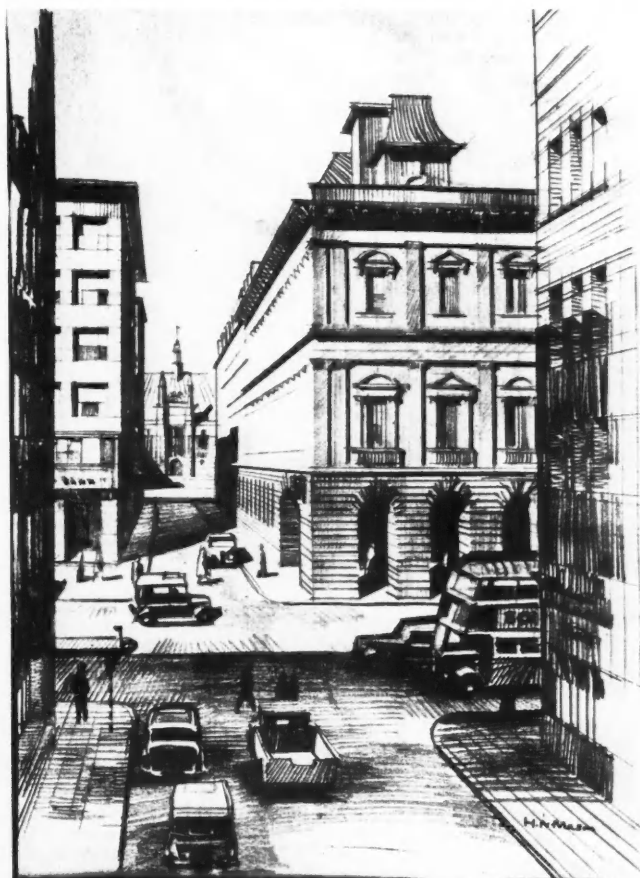
Monuments, churches, and important modern architecture have received careful thought. In general, they will be not only very much better seen, in particular St. Paul's from the new squares N.E. and S.E. of it, but in many cases be set in precincts, e.g., Guildhall and the Tower. The effect of the plan is indeed to convert most areas between main routes into precincts. The criticism has been made that spaces are wasted as gardens in traffic circuses. But the waste is offset by the increased building height, and the car parks below.

The architectural opportunities presented, in conjunction with the new powers of acquisition and the competent handling of the traffic problem, makes of the Plan a soberly inspiring prospect, worthy of the traditions and nobility of London.

However, no sites for power stations are provided, so at any point the Government may step in and queer the whole pitch. C. H.



3.—BIRD'S-EYE VIEW OF PROPOSED GUILDHALL PRECINCT COMPRISING NEW CORPORATION OFFICES



4.—THE CHEAPSIDE UNDERPASS AT ST. MARY-LE-BOW. The underpass would connect Gresham and Cannon Streets. (Right) 5.—LOOKING UP KING STREET TO GUILDHALL showing arceding of an existing building to widen roadway. The drawings 2, 4 and 5 are by H. N. Mason

# BIRDS SAILORS SEE

By E. A. WALLIS

IT has always surprised me that so few sailors know anything about the birds they see during their voyages. Yet they have unique opportunities to watch and study a great many species of birds that relatively few people are ever likely to see alive. The oceans of the world have a vast bird population; and, as is perhaps only natural, far less is known about many of the sea-birds than is known about the land-birds. Most of the sea-birds never set foot on land except during the few weeks of the nesting season. The rest of the year is spent far out at sea.

The bridge or deck of a ship may not appear to be a specially good place for bird-watching. All the same, anyone who is interested in ornithology will find a great deal of material to study even during a comparatively short voyage. For not only are there the sea-birds; there are also, especially nearer the coasts and, above all, in the Mediterranean, a great variety of land-birds that settle for a time on the ship. Occasionally these land-birds give you a surprise.

On April 6, 1945, 120 miles west of the coast of Portugal, a wood-pigeon came aboard at day-break, and rested on the topping lifts for some hours. On May 15, 1945, on our way to New York we were accompanied for two days by several swallows, and a curlew flew low over the after-deck, but could not find a satisfactory perch; and two days later, when the ship's position was 26° west, another curlew came aboard during the night and stayed with us till late in the afternoon. Again, on October 31, 1945, between 200 and 300 miles north-east of the Azores, an owl, a starling and a peregrine falcon were all on the ship together. I had only a fleeting glimpse of the owl, which was about the size of a barn-owl, but much darker.

During the spring and autumn migrating periods a trip down the Mediterranean is a source of constant interest to a bird-lover. Starlings, swallows, larks, wagtails, chaffinches willow-wrens and chiffchaffs all come aboard regularly, and it is not at all unusual to see garden-warblers and blackcaps running about the decks. In the Eastern Mediterranean we have had a great many quails, turtle-doves, and small warblers and several hoopoes and little owls on board. Once there were four peregrine falcons and eight scops owls on the rigging and yard-arms; and a stone-curlew accompanied us for two whole days, running about the decks without showing fear of anyone.

The sight of these birds perched on the stays or rigging or picking up scraps of food on the decks is always a joy. They are usually much tamer on board a ship than they are on land, probably by reason of the physical exhaustion that has overtaken them after a long flight across the sea. They are ready to take advantage of anything that offers them a chance of a rest. Yet only a small fraction of migrating land-birds ever settle on ships. I have seen robins, thrushes, starlings, lapwings, avocets, swallows and house-martins and other land-birds flying low over the sea quite near the ship but making no effort to settle on it.

Perhaps it is only natural that I should pay special attention to the sea-birds. It is true that they are fewer in species than the land-birds, but they make up for this by their interest, and by the fact that you have to go to sea to meet with them.

As you leave the coastal waters on a trip across the North Atlantic the gulls and gannets, razorbills and guillemots drop astern until, when the ship is well out at sea, their place is taken by other species of oceanic birds. Gulls, such as the herring, black-backed and common, are rare beyond 150 miles or so from land. The only really oceanic gull in the Northern Hemisphere is the kittiwake, though I have seen the black-headed gull far out in the Atlantic and as far south as the Azores. The kittiwake is the gull of the North Atlantic. On more than one crossing I have seen them every day. It is interesting that many of these graceful birds that follow the ship for a whole day may have been hatched on the Farne Islands or on the cliffs of Yorkshire or Ireland. During a northern winter they stray as far as Newfoundland.



Probably the commonest sea-bird in the Atlantic north of the Azores is the fulmar. Both light and dark phases occur, though the light phase is much the commoner. You see them all the year round right up to the American coast, though they are commonest in the eastern half of the Ocean. Around the Azores the southern lesser-black-backed and yellow-legged gulls are quite common, the former easily distinguished from the northern race by its much lighter back. In the harbour at Halifax, Nova Scotia, I have seen a few Kumlein's gulls, very much like a herring-gull, but with much less black on the wing-tips.

The shearwaters and storm-petrels of the North Atlantic are a constant source of interest and wonder. It is none too easy to identify the various species unless by chance some individual happens to get blown on to the ship, when you can examine it at leisure. Generally speaking the two shearwaters of the eastern side of the Atlantic are the Manx and Mediterranean. Both these species are abundant during the winter months. Farther west, and particularly during the northern summer, the great and sooty shearwaters (both species that nest right down to the Antarctic) appear in vast numbers as far north as the Newfoundland Banks. With them are thousands of Wilson's petrels, another sea-bird whose nesting home is the extreme south—on the islands around Cape Horn and the Antarctic Continent.

A note in my bird-diary runs as follows:—

"May 25, 1945. Eleventh day out. 39½° N., 70° W. A Wilson's petrel flew aboard during my watch and was handed to me at midnight, apparently undamaged and in good condition, merely dazed by the bright artificial lights, which no doubt attracted it. (I was at the time serving in one of H.M. Hospital Ships.) He rested quietly on the settee in my cabin throughout the night, burrowing down under the cushion, and at eight o'clock in the morning I took him up to the bridge and released him from the lee cab. As I dropped him out of the cab window he spread his wings and took the air in perfectly normal flight."

Some eight days later I wrote in my diary: "Halifax, Nova Scotia, to Liverpool. 43° N., 50° W. South of the Great Newfoundland Bank. Dense fog all day. . . . It lifted for an hour at sunset. Then I found the ocean to be full of bird-life. Storm-petrels and shearwaters were everywhere, flying in all directions, sometimes in small parties, sometimes in large flocks. Many of the birds were sitting on the water resting or feeding, and we passed through several vast flocks. These birds were not travelling in concerted movement, as were the shearwaters and Wilson's petrels I observed only a few days ago three degrees farther south, where there was a marked trend towards the north, all the birds being continuously on the wing. . . . This suggests that I have been privileged to witness not only the northward migration of vast numbers of shearwaters but also the



termination of the migration and their arrival at their wintering grounds in the cold waters of the Labrador Current."

It was interesting to reflect that these birds were some 7,000 miles distant from their breeding homes in the Southern Hemisphere.

There is something awe-inspiring in the sight of shearwaters and storm-petrels following the ship in the teeth of an Atlantic gale. The smaller storm-petrels are no bigger than house-martins. The speed with which they travel in a high wind is amazing. Keeping their wings rigid, they literally skim over the waves, often cutting the surface with their wing-tips. It should be remembered, too, that these little creatures live thousands of miles from land during winter and survive the worst Atlantic weather.

In the tropical and sub-tropical parts of the Atlantic you occasionally see the lovely red-tailed tropic-bird, pure white with enormously long tail-feathers. I have seen them off the Bermudas, but they do not come far into the

northern parts of the ocean. There are only three species of tropic-birds. The two central feathers of the tail are enormously elongated and may be as much as two-thirds of the total length of the bird. They are known to sailors as bosun's birds. Those I saw were about 1,000 miles from the nearest land.

Two other kinds of birds that are not uncommon in the North Atlantic call for a brief mention—the skuas and the auks. I have seen four species of skua during the runs from England to America—the great, the arctic, the pomarine and the long-tailed skua. Their dark plumage, the light patches on the wings, and, in the pomarine and long-tailed, the long feather of the tail, make them easily distinguishable from gulls, even at a considerable distance. Their flight is rapid, and they get their food by chasing terns and gulls and making them disgorge the contents of their crops. Arctic and pomarine skuas are seen mainly in the eastern side of the Atlantic, but I have

seen great skuas quite near the American coast. Of the auk family the little auk, a purely Arctic species, is the only one regularly found far from land. I have seen puffins 300 miles out, but the guillemots and razorbills seem to range in the waters much nearer the coast. Guillemots will go considerable distances during the nesting season to find food for their young. During a trip to Northern Russia in June, 1945, I saw many more than 20 miles out at sea flying landwards with fish in their beaks.

It is noteworthy, in considering the sea-birds generally, that several species migrate from the far south around the Antarctic Continent to the far north of the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans during the southern winter. Conversely, such species as the arctic and sandwich terns, which nest in the Northern Hemisphere up to the Arctic, go as far south as the Antarctic during the northern winter. So far as I know few land-birds that nest in the Southern Hemisphere come north of the Equator on winter migrations.

## PROBLEMS OF BUYING GUN-DOGS

By J. B. DROUGHT

THE first thing every prospective gun-dog owner must decide is whether to choose a youngster or one advertised as fully trained. Either way there are several pros and cons. If you purchase a "made" animal, you get a dog whose habits have been inculcated for good or ill by someone else. Since no two men handle a dog alike, his ways may not be your ways, and possibly you have to start and break established traits, which is not easy.

You may say that the average intelligent dog can be taught anything within reason, provided he is not too old. Possibly, but the early lessons are the foundation on which the whole structure, so to speak, is built, and the character of the grown dog depends almost entirely on the way basic principles have been taught. Provided, therefore, that you have the leisure and aptitude for training, there is more to be said, I think, in favour of purchasing a puppy than an adult dog. It will be a "one-man" dog in the sense that an animal which has passed through other hands can never be; you will establish that intimate relationship at its most impressionable age, which has so important a bearing on the dog's working capacity later on.

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The choice of a puppy intended purely as a companion is seldom a matter of much difficulty. Provided the dog is well-looking and alert, his companionable qualities are probably of more moment to his prospective owner than his physical attributes. Yet the latter are emphatically important in dogs designed for specialist work.

Naturally, with very young dogs a good deal must be taken on trust. No one can tell at a tender age how a puppy's nose, his hunting qualities, or even his intelligence is going to develop. But you can make a very intelligent guess at a youngster's possibilities if you have the choice of a litter running free, for you will naturally reject the shy timid creature which shrinks away from you in favour of a bold pup, full of life and on his toes, and the greater his capacity for mischief the more will he merit your further attention.

So you may then ask the kennel-owner for a rather closer scrutiny, and let us hope the puppy of your provisional choice has a bright intelligent eye and a broad forehead, for even if the dictates of "fashion" suggest an elongated head, you want brains in a working dog and the room for their development which a nicely rounded skull affords. You will look for open nostrils and a wide nose, for deep shoulders, well-sprung ribs, firm loins and thighs which give muscular promise. And, however good a dog may be in other respects, if he is weak in the hindquarters or wrong in the feet, reject him, for these points in an animal which has to gallop freely over rough country and endure a long day's work are of primary importance.

First, then, have the puppy trotted backwards and forwards so that you can watch his action from the front and rear, and note whether his movements are free or stiff. Then put him on a table and examine his feet, the conformation of which should be compact, with toes

neither arched nor spreading. Look for any sign of inflammation or abscesses between the toes. The latter, if present in a puppy, probably arise from some inherent weakness, and being likely in such a case to be recurring, should be enough to cause rejection, but inflammatory symptoms, probably as the result of slightly "fired" feet, are a matter of minor importance. Then run your hands down the dog's legs to make sure the bones are sound and well developed, see that he is not "cow-hocked" and that he stands firm and squarely on all legs.

Your pup may show signs of worms, but otherwise at a tender age his condition is unlikely to indicate ills that adult dogflesh is heir to. Still, it is better to be sure than sorry, and a bright coat may cover a blemished body, so turn the hair well back and look for any sign of scab or inflammation. Be sure there is no redness or swelling about the flaps of the ears, no discharge therefrom, and satisfy yourself that the pup is not even slightly deaf.

Test the sight very carefully; white spots around the eye pupil suggest possible cataract later on, and the whites of the eye should be perfectly clear. Inflammation round the rims of the eyelid points to an eczematous condition of the system, and any discharge from the eye may, though it does not necessarily, indicate distemper. Next open the puppy's mouth, and see that the tongue, cheeks and throat are healthy and clean, with no sign of growths or swellings. The state of the teeth will, of course, depend on his age (as a rule you will not find full and well-rounded gums and a neat outline in which the teeth meet when the mouth is closed earlier than the age of nine months), but you can judge of a level mouth and see that the dog is neither under- nor overshot.

Lastly, give a look to his condition as a whole, and study the family history. The skin should be loose, so that you can take it up in the hand. A slightly staring coat may not be of much account, as very likely it will be due to worms, those inevitable pests of puppyhood, but the well-conditioned dog will be covered with firm flesh, and the hair will be glossy and fairly thick.

\* \* \*

There are several points of minor importance which I have not raised, but I think it may reasonably be said that if a puppy passes a scrutiny on the lines suggested and if he seems of an amiable disposition, he should be a safe buy. Should there be doubt on any point, reject him, for the delicate or malformed gun-dog, especially if he indicates any lack of physique, will be a source of constant anxiety, however brilliant his mental attributes.

Suppose you decide upon a dog already trained. There are (or were) many excellent kennels which can be relied on to send out reasonably well-trained dogs, just as there are plenty of keepers who will not "sell you a pup" in more senses than one. At the same time there are several good reasons why a thorough preliminary trial of a dog makes the transaction

more satisfactory in the long run to both parties concerned.

Most gun-dogs are temperamental, and some may have peculiarities which will not come to light on first acquaintance. For example, a dog may be at first sight a perfect performer in the field and yet may possess one of those jealous temperaments which precludes working him in company; and you may find when you get him alongside his own kind in the field that he will shut up and do nothing. He may have one of those very highly strung natures (which you so often find in setters) which prevents him from giving of his best until he has thoroughly settled down under the new régime. If this be so, he will probably hesitate and fumble his game at first, but it is obviously unfair to judge on one performance.

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A dog sent on approval may have had a long train journey, during which he has been kept short of food, hustled about in the guard's van and pushed into sidings for hours. He arrives at his journey's end half scared and worn out, to be met by a total stranger and hustled with scant ceremony into a strange kennel. If you take that dog out for a trial next day you should not expect him to live up to his reputation. The most perfectly trained dog in the world would not do so, so it is fair neither to the animal nor to his previous owner to judge him on a performance when the state of his nerves, and probably his stomach also, fit him more for a quiet day than active work outside.

Again, no two men work a dog alike, and at first the dog, missing the voice and handling of his old master, cannot be expected to work to capacity. Therefore in one or two casual outings you have neither time nor opportunity fully to appreciate his reaction to new ownership or to allow for any peculiarities he may have. He is a stranger in a strange land, and you must allow him reasonable time to habituate himself to new surroundings and a different method of handling before expecting a polished performance in the field. It is premature to write him down as useless if he does not come up to your expectations at the first few times of asking.

At this time of year good working dogs can often be acquired from gamekeepers, and it is no bad plan to accompany a friendly keeper on an off-day and see a few youngsters tried out over moor or marsh. You can make acquaintance with various candidates for your situation, see how they work in the open, in cover, over water, and decide which is best suited to your own line of country.

After a few trials there remains only the question of cost, which, relatively speaking, is the least important part of the business, since a good dog is worth, in reason, any price set on him. The value of your investment lies not only in his game-finding abilities, but in the affection and companionship he will give you all his working years. Every time his wisdom in the field puts your own judgment at fault, or outpoints your neighbour's budding champion—why, there is the interest on your money at a hundred per cent.

# AFTER CARNOUSTIE

A Golf Commentary by  
BERNARD DARWIN

WHEN I got to Carnoustie I determined to keep a diary of the Championship, writing a little bit every evening. Thus I could write of any particular match when it was fresh in my mind; that was my professedly virtuous reason, but there was perhaps another and lazier one, namely that I should have less to do at the end. Whatever my precise motives I was so sleepy and tired at the end of the first day that I did not keep my good—or bad—resolutions and let things slide. But now I find myself sitting down to write on the Friday night before the Saturday's final. After all, I say to myself, the championship is really over. One of two very fine American golfers will win it and we are going to enjoy an admirable exhibition of golf. We have much enjoyed our invaders' pleasant company, and we do not grudge them an entirely well-earned success; but as far as we are concerned there is no more championship and we can look back on it as already a part of golfing history.

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We have been well and truly beaten. The Walker Cup prepared us for the blow, but Carnoustie has rubbed it in with a vengeance. And it might have been worse. The mathematics of the draw—a rather unequal one—made it clear that there could not be more than two Americans in the last four; otherwise there might easily have been four of them in the semi-final. Not till Robin Rutherford most gallantly defeated Riegel in the last sixteen had any one of the eight American Walker Cup players been beaten by anybody save one of his own comrades. As a friend said to me to-night: "There is no doubt about it, they have got something we have not got." There is no doubt about it, and I discard all—to my mind—nonsensical theories that the something is that they have more beef-steaks to eat than we have. "Let us in a spirit of love enquire," as Mr. Chadband would remark, what that something is.

I think that the modern American amateur plays more golf than our men do, and plays it, if I may say so in the most innocent possible sense, in a more professional spirit. He can give more time to the game, practice more—some of them, such as Stranahan, have a capacity for

practice which I should have deemed incredible—and play in more competitions. I am not saying that we ought to emulate them; I say it simply as what I believe to be a fact.

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As to the particular respect in which they beat us, it seems to me to be beyond question in the play round the hole. They have the art of boiling down three shots into two to perfection. They are quite beautiful chippers from round about the green and appear to play the stroke in a uniform way and nearly always with the same sort of club, which is a very lofted one. The boldness with which they play this stroke and the amount of stop or bite which they impart to it fills me with a constant wonder, and if there is a better chipper in the world than Turnesa I have never seen him. Their power of laying the ball dead or nearly dead is not confined to grass. They are astonishingly skilful with their blasters from any bunker in the neighbourhood of the green; they are always playing for the pin out of bunkers, and they constantly get near it.

I think I said after the Walker Cup that I could not point to any particular feature of their putting, except that the ball went into the hole. Now that I have watched them for another week I can say rather more about their method, even though I cannot discover its secret. They nearly all stand with their feet close together and have an almost square stance, the right foot perhaps an inch or two forward. They all take the club quite a short way back (there is none of that taking the club well away from the ball which was once preached) and seem to give the ball a decidedly sharp tap with the club-head going well through. The ball seems to leap away as if it were going to race past the hole and then to pull up uncommonly near it. A tap with a follow through—that is the best way I can describe it, and if this recipe is of any comfort to anyone he is welcome to practise it on his carpet.

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There is another respect—a moral rather than a physical one—in which they are wholly admirable. They are splendid finishers. In the Walker Cup they showed, as I have said before,

a wonderful collective power of spurting, and at Carnoustie they exhibited individually the capacity for getting the last ounce of effort out of themselves at the crucial moment. There were various matches in which our hopes rose high only to be dashed. An American giant was being held with three or four holes to go, and it seemed as if anything might happen; but alas! nearly every time—not quite, for I remember Rutherford—the same thing did happen; the Briton faded a little and the American did the holes in the right figures and won the match.

One example is fresh in my mind. Chapman and McKinlay were having a regular "dog-fight" of rather indifferent golf, and Chapman had done his best to throw the match away. When they came all square to the 17th Chapman first holed out from fifteen feet, with his enemy lying only five feet away, and then at the 18th, when his caddie begged him to play short, he waved such prudent advice aside and slashed his ball right home with a wooden club. If he had gone into the burn, everybody would have said he had been foolish; but then he didn't go into the burn.

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At that point I stopped and went to bed, and now add later a short postscript as to the final. Alas that I have left so little room for so truly historic a match! It was impossible to be even in the smallest degree disappointed at there being no Briton in the final, when our invaders gave so magnificent an exposition of golf, perfect alike in matter and manner. As to Turnesa's pitching and putting, it was as that of one possessed. Hubert in *Ivanhoe* said that he did not yield to his adversary, Locksley, but to the devil that was in his jerkin. Chapman might have said the same. His own pitching and putting were up to a standard that is beyond us in this country, but they were not quite good enough for Turnesa. The winner had one great stroke of luck: when he was five down in the morning going to the tenth hole his ball jumped the burn, and he won the hole in four and started a run of victories. Lucky it was, but a man must first have some luck to win a championship, and then he must be able to use it. How tremendously Turnesa used his!

## CORRESPONDENCE

### AN OXFORD PROJECT

SIR,—Apropos of the article in your issue of May 30 about the proposed extensions of Magdalen College, Oxford, may a laywoman with the greatest diffidence suggest that instead of the proposed curtain walls there should be wrought-iron screens between the admirable new buildings designed by Mr. Oliver Hill and the Nicholas stone archway? For would not screens of wrought iron be kinder to the scale of the beautiful archway than walls of stone?—AMATEUR, *Hampstead, N.W.3.*

### TRANSPLANTING OF SNAKES-HEADS

From Lord Haverigg.

SIR, With reference to Mr. J. D. U. Ward's letter in your issue of May 30 about transplanting snakes-heads, we were fortunate enough to get some bulbs of this plant a few years ago and planted them in two rather damp pieces of ground. I cannot say that they have increased very much, but they have certainly held their own, and every now and again one or two plants appear 30 or 40 yards away from the original clump.

The soil here is strong clay, so I think that if they do here they would do anywhere. HAZLERIGG, *Noseley Hall, Billesdon, Leicester.*

### THE PARAGON, BLACKHEATH

SIR,—The accompanying copy of a water-colour executed by the writer in 1939 shows The Paragon, Blackheath, before enemy action in 1940, and again in 1944, destroyed the block

half-hidden by the tree on the left of the picture and the end block beyond it.

This fine piece of Georgian architecture, in the form of a crescent, is, I think it would be undisputed, second to none of a like character to be found in Bath, Buxton, Cheltenham, etc., and it is sad now to recall the severe mutilation alluded to above. However, it is gratifying to know that the whole group is in the capable hands of an architect fully qualified to handle the task, who is rebuilding the destroyed blocks and generally rein-

stating throughout. I am informed it is intended to convert the group into residential flats of a high standard.

—EDGAR W. PITT, 40, *Hardy Road, Blackheath, S.E.3.*

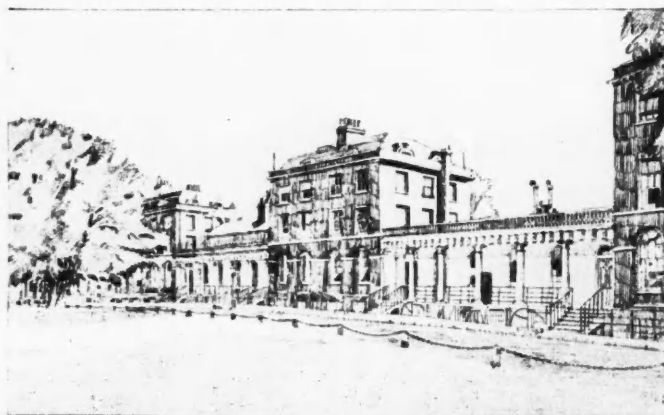
### ADMISSION TO KNOLE

SIR,—I recently took some friends to see over Knole, Kent, encouraged by your recent article, in which the days and times of opening by the National Trust were stated. If I recount in some detail our disappointing experience, which I understand has happened to others, it is in no spirit of

carping but in order to warn other prospective visitors and, it may be hoped, persuade the National Trust to improve the arrangements for admitting the public.

Knole is advertised as being open from 2 p.m. till 5 p.m., which I think conveys the impression that although no one would be admitted after five, people who had arrived some time previously would be admitted up till near that hour. The journey to Sevenoaks must take nearly an hour from London, and then there is a walk of nearly a mile up to the mansion itself. Few London workers therefore could expect to get to the door before 3.15 at the earliest on Saturday afternoon, if they had lunched in London after working till 1 o'clock, and many would hardly get there much before 4 p.m.

We motored from here—nearly 50 miles return, which involves some inroad into one's petrol ration, and it was 4 p.m. by the time we had parked the car and joined a queue about 50 yards long. Many of those ahead of us must have been waiting a very long time. Soon after our arrival some people were admitted and an official told us that a further 25 people would be admitted at about twenty past or half past four, and that it was not worth while for the rest of us to wait. We did wait, of course, hoping; but, sure enough, soon after 4.30 all but the first 25 were told to go away. There must have been 20 or more ahead of us and nearer 50 behind us. I admit we had arrived late, but many of the 20 ahead of us may have been waiting since soon after 3 o'clock if the queue



THE PARAGON, BLACKHEATH, AS IT WAS BEFORE ENEMY ACTION DESTROYED TWO OF ITS BLOCKS

See letter: *The Paragon, Blackheath*





ST. PAUL'S FROM THE THAMES: A PHOTOGRAPH FROM DE LA MOTTE'S *THE SUNBEAM*, AN ALBUM PUBLISHED IN 1859.  
(Right) A VIEW TAKEN ABOUT 1883, (Below) IN 1939

See letter: *The Eclipse of St. Paul's*

had already reached a good distance by the time they arrived.

There seems to be a great interest nowadays in seeing houses and works of art thrown open to the public, and, quite apart from the disappointment caused, about 75 half-crowns turned away from the door could surely have been used to provide extra staff. I do not believe that, in a place so accessible as Sevenoaks, this would be very difficult to provide, and there must be many intellectual young men and women in London, students and the like, who would not find it difficult to master the history, and would welcome the opportunity in exchange for their expenses and a moderate fee.

We gathered that 25 were admitted at a time, and that the tour lasts 45 minutes. I don't know whether this means that only four parties in all are admitted between 2 p.m. and 4.20, or whether more than one goes round at a time, but the rate of progress in the queue was hardly perceptible. I am sure the National Trust are anxious to do all they can, and there may be considerable difficulties in their way, but I do feel that if further facilities are impossible to provide, the public should be told that only a limited number can be admitted—or that none will be admitted after 4.30 p.m.—BARBARA BIRLEY, *Dollington, Uckfield, Sussex*.

[An official of the National Trust informs us that "the only times at which visitors have had to be turned away from Knole are Saturday afternoons, when, up to date, far more visitors have unfortunately wished to see the State Rooms than it has been possible to admit. Whereas the closing hour is stated to be 5 p.m., in no instance has the last party left the house before 5.30, and lately not before 6 p.m., since it seldom takes less than an hour to conduct each party round. This means that it is past 7 before the staff have closed the State Rooms and finished work." It is explained that the geography of the State Rooms, which present a series of bottlenecks, is such that it is not physically possible to admit more than four parties of 25 people at a time, so that to increase the number of guides would unfortunately not solve the difficulty.—ED.]

### STILE OR GATE?

SIR,—The photograph of a drawbridge illustrating the article *New Life For Our Canals* in a recent number of *COUNTRY LIFE* reminded me of what was described to me as a "lifting stile" near Penshurst, Kent.

When I reached the site of this "stile," I was confronted with the object shown in my first photograph.

After a short examination I found that when lifted the contraption folded into the position shown in the other photograph.

Is this a stile or a gate or neither or both? And are there any other



examples of a similar barrier anywhere else?—J. SOUTHEY, *Sevenoaks, Kent*.

### THE ECLIPSE OF ST. PAUL'S

SIR,—A book in the library of the Victoria and Albert Museum, *The Sunbeam*, by De la Motte (1859) contains 20 photographs, mostly architectural, and among them the view of St. Paul's shown in the first of the accompanying photographs. There were then no high buildings on the water-front to hide the beauty of Wren's masterpiece; but behind St. Benet's church tower (right centre) rises the first of the army of tall Victorian buildings that eventually hid from this view all but the towers and dome of the cathedral. This particular erection still stands and prevents what would be a marvellous view of St. Paul's from Queen Victoria Street.

The second photograph was taken about 25 years later, between the construction of the predecessor of the

Faraday (Telephone) Building in 1880 (seen behind the bellying sails of a barge) and the demolition of St. Mary Magdalen's church tower (the second steeple on the right of the picture) in 1887. Most of the old riverside premises have disappeared, and the roof of St. Benet's Church is now invisible. But the government building of 1880 was, as now, a skyscraper, and the modern Faraday House, as is clear from the third photograph, only aggravates what was an eyesore before and now blots out all but the tops of St. Paul's west towers. In view of this *fait accompli*, the recent agitation about the Bankside Power Station, however much one may agree with it, is surely, as regards the cathedral, rather a case of trying to shut the stable door too late.

The trees seen in front of St. Paul's, in the photograph of 1859, must belong to the garden of Doctors' Commons, the buildings of which, although derelict (having been abandoned two years earlier), were not

demolished until 1867, when Queen Victoria Street was made across their site. These trees, which were elms of mature age, for long harboured a rookery (see *London Topographical Record* XI, page 77).

Also worthy of note are the attractive premises immediately before St. Benet's Church, especially the circular top to a warehouse hoist, the Venetian windows close by and the series of points that leave one guessing whether they are gables or conical roofs.—GERALD COBB, *Streatham, S.W.16*.

### THE WANDERINGS OF MEDIAEVAL GLASS

SIR,—Mr. David Rutter's remarks, in *COUNTRY LIFE* of May 23, about the Jesse window at York Minster, impel me to state the facts of the case. William Peckitt, the York glazier, bought the panels from the Warden and Fellows of New College, Oxford. He brought them to York, and set them in the space which ever since they have filled, making coloured borders because the window-spaces were too broad for the glass as it was.

Both these panels and the surviving panels of the Jesse tree removed from the chapel of Winchester College about 125 years ago were made at Oxford. The panels that Peckitt brought to York could never have been made here; they are not of York manufacture, design or colour. They could never have adorned a parish church in York, for there is not a window-space that they could have filled. Finally, they fit exactly the window-spaces in the ante-chapel of New College from which they were removed.—F. HARRISON (Chancellor of York Minster), *The Chancery, 3, Minster Court, York*.

### A ROBIN SQUATTER

SIR,—Major Jarvis's recent reference to a pair of robins that commandeered his potato-shed for a nesting-site recalls an equally determined robin squatter which some years ago, although living in a large and very secluded garden, decided that the shelf of a shed in which an enthusiastic amateur carpenter spent most of his day was the only place to bring up a family.

Her potential host was very kind but firm, the first beakful of dead leaves deposited on the shelf was promptly removed to prevent disappointment later. The luncheon interval then intervened, and by the late afternoon a considerable pile of leaves has been accumulated. These were again thrown out, but before night a fresh start had been made and the foundations of a nest well and truly laid.

To save further argument, the shelf was cleared again and a piece of wire netting with a fairly fine mesh was nailed across the shelf, on the assumption that the robin would consider a wire cage (possibly a trap) a most unsafe and unsuitable place to



A FOLDING BARRIER IN A LANE NEAR PENSURST, KENT

See letter: *Stile or Gate?*

rear a family. On the contrary, hardly had the shed been opened the next day when the builder arrived with a beakful of leaves, and from then onward building operations went forward with feverish haste for the rest of the day, the slight drawback of the bird having to push herself and the leaves through mesh of the netting being apparently not worthy of notice.

My friend then gave up the contest, the nest was finished, the eggs were laid and the robin proceeded to sit. No talking or the usual noise of carpentering seemed to have any effect on her nerves; she sat tranquil and unblinking through the most shattering noises of hammering that nearly took the roof off. However, like most of us, she had a vulnerable spot. The noise of sawing drove her into a frenzy. No sooner did a plank appear and sawing begin than, like a flash, she was off her nest, flying wildly round imploring, in fact insisting, that the tumult must cease. On one occasion she even tried to sit on the moving saw while she made her hysterical expostulations.

So a gentleman's agreement was reached, and until the family had flown all sawing operations were either suspended or done elsewhere. Unfortunately, the departure of the family and the methods by which they were conducted through the netting were never known. The whole operation was carried out in complete secrecy and with no indication it was about to take place.—M. M. OYLER, 37, Ebury Street, S.W.1.

### THE ORIGINAL STARS AND STRIPES

SIR,—I was extremely interested in Mr. G. H. Viner's letter in your issue of May 23 on the origin of the Stars and Stripes.

On a recent visit to the United States I was taken by American friends to a service on Easter Sunday at the Washington Memorial Chapel at Valley Forge, and noticed various versions of the Stars and Stripes hanging there.

One had the thirteen horizontal stripes of alternate red and white with what appeared to me to be a Union Jack in the corner. I asked my host what this flag represented, and he told me that it was the original American



PURE-BRED EXMOOR PONIES OF THE FAMOUS ZEAL HERD

See letter: *The Exmoor Pony*

flag and that there had been several versions since, culminating in the present one.—F. R. M. DE PAULA, 8, Palace Gate, W.8.

### A WISBECH BENEFACTOR

SIR,—In Wisbech Church, the fine tower of which was illustrated in your issue of May 23, there is a wall monument to Thomas Parke, a local benefactor, who died in 1631 at the age of 87. As one of the inscriptions records, it was erected to his memory by his son-in-law, Sir Miles Sandys, and Dame Elizabeth, his wife, who appears kneeling in the little niche below the prayer desks.

This charming monument is one of a largish group, a feature of which is a kneeling daughter placed in a niche and on a much smaller scale than the principal figures. The scheme is found in places so remote from each other as Snarford, Lincolnshire, and Boughton Aluph, Kent, a fact which, at this date, virtually proves a common origin in a London yard.

This example differs from the majority of monuments in having the emblems of mortality placed above those of the principal effigies, the shrouded skeleton being fitted into the lowest stage of the superstructure (one cannot call it apediment), ending in a fine coat-of-arms flanked on a lower level by a pair of hour-glasses. The columns framing the whole design are complete with Order and surmounted by Laureate shields, and a charming cherub head fills the spandrel between the arches, surmounting the kneeling figures of Parkes and his beheaded wife. The daughter in her long mourning veil is placed under the desk at which her parents kneel, which encloses her as in a shrine. The well-designed base is prettily (and not fussily) adorned with foliated scrolls and, on the brackets of the columns, with ovals as well. The condition of the whole is superb.

The work seems to belong to the studio, or rather yard, to use the contemporary phrase, of Gerald Christmas (died 1634), in whose work and that of his sons and apprentices, John and Matthias (died 1654), many of these features occur repeatedly. The employment of father and sons on the elaborate Lord Mayors' pageants of the day gave

them a special facility in designing angels, and the shrouded figure motif, sometimes replaced by an elaborate ossuary, as on Archbishop of Abbot's tomb at Guildford, is singularly persistent and sometimes, as there, combined with the normal effigy; the fine quality of the alabaster, too, points in the same direction.

We may, I think, safely see in this charming work a new example of the Christmas skill, and note a further pageant detail in the shape of the flower and fruit that flank the base



WOODEN CARVINGS THAT REPRESENT JACK-IN-THE-GREEN IN A SHROPSHIRE CHURCH

See letter: *Jack-in-the-Green Grotesques*

of the shield. Such symbolism was common enough, but the method of handling it is individual and unusual, and such as one might expect from the author of the Aurora scattering flowers on the documented tomb of Donne's pupil, Anne Drury, at Hawstead, Suffolk.—KATHARINE A. ESDALE, Leames End, West Hoathly, Sussex.

### THE EXMOOR PONY

SIR,—Apropos of Lady Wentworth's article, *Our Mixed Improved Pony Breeds*, in your issue of May 23, I think it was Chesterton who said, "only the secure are humble." The Exmoor pony needs no defence. He remains what he is and what he always has been, unruffled by anything Lady Wentworth likes to say about him. I am not quite humble enough, however, (if I am the Exmoor enthusiast of her first paragraph) to accept that odd string of adjectives ("pure aboriginal wild Native English") as mine.

It is nice to see my photograph of my mare Foxglove, though it is not quite clear whether she has been chosen to represent the "arrant jades" or the Acland type.

Lady Wentworth says Katerfelto was a cream stallion of striking appearance. He must have blanched after his

prodigious leap. Nimrod, writing in 1824, described him as dark bay and gave his breeding.

The Exmoor pony is a native of Britain, not a foreign import. We can rightly be proud of this breed which has survived since pre-historic times. Why crab it?—M. GORDON ETHERINGTON (Miss), Searles, Chittlehamholt, Umberleigh, North Devon.

### JACK-IN-THE-GREEN GROTESQUES

SIR,—I was much interested in the photograph of a carving in a Monmouthshire church (May 23) of Jack-in-the-Green, or the Green Man. Such grotesques are to be found all over the country; I know of at least 15 in places as far apart as Norwich, Bristol, the Midlands and Wales, as well as others in France and Italy.

They are probably of pagan origin. Dr. C. B. Lewis, the folklorist writes: "It would be a mistake to think that because Christianity finally triumphed in the long struggle with its pagan rivals, the latter disappeared the moment the former was officially recognised." Unofficially, pagan custom existed side by side with the Christian religion, as can be seen in other ecclesiastical details.

I enclose drawings of two examples from the church of Eaton-under-Heywood, Shropshire. They are the most interesting of a series of wooden bosses in the chancel, being carved with grotesque heads, associated with oak leaves, or with foliage alone. The larger head has the typical arrangement of leaves issuing from the ears and forehead, and what may be oak apples coming out of the mouth; the other shows a mask-like face surrounded by conventional leaves.—LILIAN HAYWARD, Tickleton, Church Stretton, Shropshire.

### ANOTHER JOHN WILKES

SIR,—With reference to the china figure said to be that of John Wilkes, a noted Birmingham locksmith, illustrated in your issue of May 16, the dates given below the photograph are those of the birth and death of John Wilkes the journalist and politician whose fight for the liberty of the subject created such a stir in the middle of the 18th century.

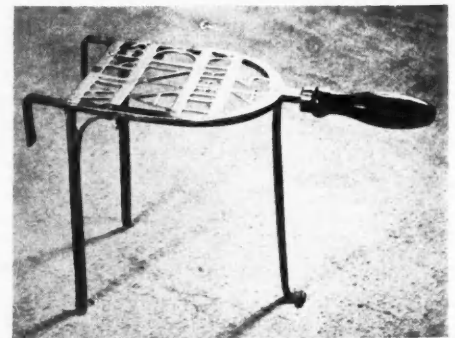
Popular feeling in favour of the latter John Wilkes ran very high and it is well known that pictures and figures of him were widely made at the time. It seems far more likely that the figure you illustrated is one of these rather than a representation of a craftsman who, however eminent a craftsman, could have had only a comparatively limited reputation. In any case, John Wilkes the locksmith was an earlier character, since there is a record of work done by him at Chatsworth in 1694.

I enclose a photograph of an interesting relic of John Wilkes the politician which I recently acquired. It is a brass trivet, the top of which is fretted with the inscription "Wilkes" (Continued on page 1123)



MONUMENT TO THOMAS PARKE (DIED 1631) IN WISBECH CHURCH, PROBABLY FROM THE WORKSHOP OF GERALD CHRISTMAS

See letter: *A Wisbech Benefactor*



A TRIVET COMMEMORATING JOHN WILKES, FAMOUS 18th-CENTURY JOURNALIST AND POLITICIAN

See letter: *Another John Wilkes*



and Liberty 45," the figures "45" being an allusion to No. 45 of Wilkes's paper, *The North Briton*, the publication of which gave rise to his troubles with the Government of the day, with the result that "45" came to be adopted as the popular symbol of liberty.—C. E. SHELLY, *Woodland, West Clendon, Surrey.*

### JEROME K. JEROME AS JOURNALIST

SIR,—Major Jarvis is hardly fair (in *COUNTRY LIFE* of May 23) to the journalistic prowess of Jerome K. Jerome, who was more than "a columnist in a now long defunct paper, *The Idler*." He was a founder in 1892, with Robert Barr and G. B. Burgin, and editor of an excellent and intelligently produced monthly magazine of that name, to which most of the best of the younger authors of the time contributed. In the following year he started and edited an interesting weekly paper, *To-day*, which was equally successful.—JAMES THORPE, *Lean Prior, Buckfastleigh, South Devon.*

### RUSKIN'S LONDON HOME

SIR,—The old house on Denmark Hill, S.E., which was John Ruskin's third home and in which his father and mother lived until their death, is about to be demolished, and I send you a photograph to mark the melancholy



AWAITING DEMOLITION: THE HOUSE IN SOUTH-EAST LONDON WHERE RUSKIN LIVED

See letter: *Ruskin's London Home*

event. It was here the family removed from Herne Hill, to seven acres of garden and paddocks, glasshouses and stables, fowl-houses and piggeries, where the "pigs spoke excellent Irish."

Smetham described it as "a large house with a lodge . . . and grand rooms glittering with pictures, chiefly Turners." He goes on to speak of

John "unhanging a Turner from the wall of a distant room; he brought it to the table and put it in my hands; then we talked. . . . And so he kept on gliding all over the house, hanging and unhanging, and stopping a few minutes to talk."

Although in latter years a private hotel, the house and its surroundings were but little changed from Ruskin's

days. With its lovely sweep of trees, and open meadowland, it was a place of rare charm and beauty which we can ill afford to lose.—ALLAN JOBSON, 21, *Crown Dale, S.E.19.*

### JOHN EVELYN AND THE OX

SIR,—The article *Old Cattle Prints*, in your issue of April 18, reminded me of an entry in John Evelyn's diary for April 29, 1649, which runs as follows:

I saw in London a huge ox bred in Kent, 17 feet in length, and much higher than I could reach.

It is a pity we don't know John Evelyn's height, but the ox must have been a monster!—J. W. RAINIER (Captain, R.N.), *Little Barfield, Westerkham, Kent.*

### SWEDISH TIMBER HOUSES

SIR,—I should be most grateful if any of your readers could tell me of any experience they may have of the timber houses of Swedish origin, a number of which have been erected at various places recently.

Are they now obtainable? What is their cost and what are their main disadvantages, if any?—H. A. SHOTTER, 4, *Vicarage Down, East Sheen, S.W.14.*

### NEW BOOKS

## ARCHITECTURE BETWEEN THE WARS

IT may be several years yet before there is any post-war architecture apart from post-war housing. Yet, in anticipation of the time when the art of building can turn to satisfy other and more varied needs, it is well to take stock of the position as it was in 1940 when the curtain fell. That the intelligent layman is now able to do thanks to the initiative of the Architecture Club in selecting and publishing a series of photographs of the best buildings erected in this country between the wars—*Recent English Architecture, 1920-1940* (*COUNTRY LIFE*, 7s. 6d.).

The choosing has been well done with the balance held even between what was called "modern" or, *horribile dictu*, "modernistic," and what was branded "traditional." It will be a great advance if in the years ahead architects can cease to be "-ists" and drop their "-isms" and just be architects. Looking through this picture book, one is not conscious that Sir Edwin Lutyens's Middleton Park is in its own category any less representative of its time than the Arncliffe Grove Underground Station, perhaps the best of many admirable buildings which Messrs. Adams, Holden and Pearson have given to London travellers. In spite of all the talk about functionalism it is the relations and proportions and harmonies that count in architecture whatever the idiom. The speech of some of these buildings may be enriched with mediaeval and classical allusions, just as others have the effect of an Englishman using foreign words picked up on a Continental tour, while others again are in the plain, direct style of a scientific statement. The second class is the one that dates most easily, as the headquarters of the Royal Institute of Architects and the City Hall, Norwich, already do in spite of some admirable qualities.

The buildings are conveniently grouped in categories—public buildings, social services, commercial and industrial, ecclesiastical, educational, domestic. No theatre is included; perhaps none notable enough was built. For the dramatic we must turn to some of the churches shown, or else to the Battersea Power Station or the Jersey Tunnel ventilator towers.

A. S. O.

### A PROSPECTOR'S DIARIES

A NOTABLE addition to the Oppenheimer series of books published by Chatto and Windus on behalf of the Government of Southern Rhodesia is *The Northern Goldfields Diaries of Thomas Baines*, edited by J. P. R. Wallis (3 vols., £4 10s.). Baines made two journeys prospecting for gold in Matabeleland (later Southern Rhodesia) between 1869 and 1872, and the account of them given in these

as chronicles of an important period in the development of Southern Africa and as a revelation of a man to whom, as his epitaph put it, "the wilderness brought gladness and the mountains peace," they are eminently readable.

T. J.

### WONDERS OF THE PLANT WORLD

PATRICK M. SYNGE'S *Plants with Personality* (Lindsay Drummond, 15s.), is a gardening book that is out

R. C. McMillan's *Planting for Plenty* (Faber, 8s. 6d.) is of a totally different character. It is a severely practical calendar of gardening hints, confined to vegetables and fruit, and finely illustrated. D. T. MacF.

### RURAL RHYMES

THE parochialism of English village life is well brought out in *I Went to Noke: An Anthology of Rustic Rhymes*, compiled by J. E. Lloyd and embellished with delightfully appropriate drawings by Sancho Panza (Allen, 3s. 6d.). Pride in one's own village or county and contempt for those of others is a vice or, if you will, a virtue of country folk, and the majority of these topographical rhymes are correspondingly partial. They range, in fact, from the unashamed self-praise of Cornwall's

*Chacewater boobies up a tree,  
Looking as whisk'd as ever could be,  
Truro men, strong as oak,  
Knock 'em down at every stroke,*

through the gentle comparisons of Bloxham for length,  
Adderbury for strength,  
But King's Sutton for beauty,

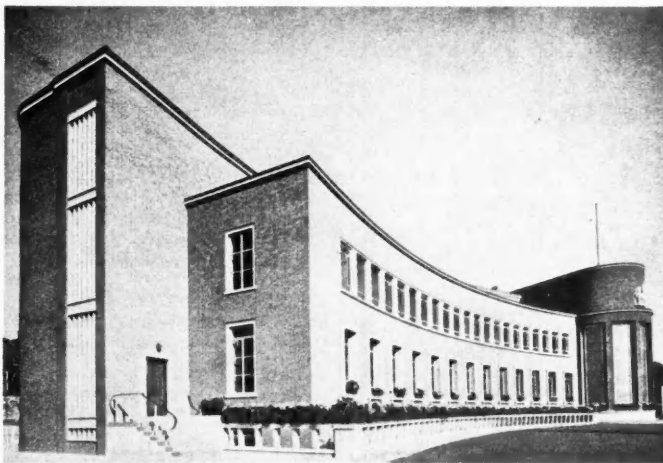
(from the Oxfordshire-Northamptonshire border, in relation to the church spires of the villages named) to the stark censure of

*Ugly church,  
Ugly steeple,  
Ugly parson,  
Ugly people,*

a rhyme attributed to Essex, which for sheer, concentrated hate must be difficult to beat. J. K. A.

### NATURE AND ART

LIGHT, colour and atmosphere are three of the outstanding characteristics of Mr. Edward Seago's painting, and they occupy a prominent place in his *A Canvas to Cover* (Collins, 15s.), a pleasantly discursive account of the possibilities of the various elements of Nature not merely to painters but to any lover of beauty. The book, which is illustrated with reproductions of nearly 70 of the author's paintings, four of which are in colour, is avowedly a recounting of personal experience and a statement of individual preferences, but in recalling the beauties he has found in earth and sky and the changing pattern of the seasons Mr. Seago bids fair to open the eyes of others to the beauty that lies around them. C. D.



METROPOLITAN WATER BOARD LABORATORIES, LONDON.

From *Recent English Architecture, 1920-1940* (*COUNTRY LIFE*)

diaries is a fascinating story of steadfastness and quiet resolution in the face of considerable drawbacks. Inadequately supported by the company that employed him, he took to paying for his expeditions by the paintings he did *en route*, several of which, together with drawings and thumbnail sketches of scenes or objects that took his fancy, are reproduced in these volumes. Painting, however, was but one of the accomplishments of this remarkable man. Explorer, naturalist, cartographer, and, when need be, doctor as well, he possessed a wide-ranging curiosity and a gift for simple and sincere description that not a few later travellers might envy. His diaries may not be a classic of exploration, but

of the ordinary. Mr. Synge writes with infectious enthusiasm on what might be termed the wonders of the plant world, on *nelumbo*, the giant sacred lotus of the East, on insectivorous plants, on the giant lobelias and senecios from the equatorial mountains of East Africa, and on the extraordinary puyas of Chile. He writes with unquestioned authority, for he has studied most of these plants in their native habitats on expeditions before the war. Few keen gardeners will read the book without being imbued with the ambition to grow some of them, difficult though they may be. John Nash's drawings and the plates from Dr. Thornton's *Temple of Flora* add to the attractions of the volume.

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## NEW BOOKS

# ARMY INDECISIONS OF 1939

Reviews by HOWARD SPRING

THE citizen who knows at first hand nothing of what goes on in the great offices of state, but comfortably takes it for granted that his interests are being looked after there and that those in authority know what they are about: such a citizen will perhaps revise his opinion on reading some passages in *Playing With Strife*, by Lieut.-Gen. Sir Philip Neame (Harrap, 15s.).

The passages are those dealing with the months before war began in 1939. Sir Philip Neame was Commandant of the Royal Military Academy, Woolwich. In 1938 he had already been asking to know what he was to do if war broke out, but it was not until February of 1939 that he was told that Sir John Dill would com-

mand the British Expeditionary Force in France, and that he himself would be Chief of the General Staff.

Since the job was now defined, the next thing obviously was to learn all that could be learned about it. "I immediately asked the General Staff at the War Office if I could study the plans for the move and employment of the B.E.F., but the D.C.I.G.S. informed me that there was nothing to tell me. During the next seven months before war broke out I asked on two other occasions, but was told nothing, or that plans were not sufficiently advanced. I knew at this time who were to be Adjutant-General and Quartermaster-General, and they were in the same condition of ignorance." By July of 1939 "Dill had been over to France and had some conversations with the French Generalissimo Gamelin, but I was still in ignorance of the War Office plans."

**PLAYING WITH STRIFE.** By Lieut.-Gen. Sir Philip Neame (Harrap, 15s.)

**MY ONE CONTRIBUTION TO CHESS.** By F. V. Morley (Faber, 7s. 6d.)

**CARRY ME BACK.** By Rebecca Yancey Williams (Michael Joseph, 10s. 6d.)

**RURAL REFLECTIONS.** By Monica M. Hutchings (Hodder and Stoughton, 8s. 6d.)

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### LAST MINUTE CHANGES

Our ultimatum to Germany expired on September 3, and "it was not until that very week that I had any access to the plans for the B.E.F. Previously neither I, nor the A.G., nor the Q.M.G. designate, had ever seen them. I went up to the War Office on the last Monday in August and demanded to know what was to happen and then spent the next six days reading through the plans and movement tables."

On September 4—the day after the ultimatum expired—when the B.E.F. had begun to move, "I was informed of a complete change of command of both the B.E.F. and the War Office higher staff. In the B.E.F., Dill was not to be Commander-in-Chief, I was not to be C.G.S., and the A.G. was also changed." When the author writes "imagine my own surprise, and still more my consternation," the

reader is well able to share those emotions with him.

Sir Philip, who knew little of War Office doings, for he had been serving in India for many years up to 1938, was unhappy about our own Army and the French. As for us, when the war began, "except for the fact that all front-line transport was mechanised, we had a 1914 army to fight a German 1939 army." As for the French, "ever since the days of Napoleon, and largely on the strength of his name," they "have had the reputation of being a great military nation, but they have nearly always been wrong in their military ideas." Between the wars they had spent millions on their navy, though they must have known that they could rely on ours. "If they had

spent one quarter of this money, honestly, on their Air Force they could have met and defeated the German air fleets."

From France, Sir Philip soon moved East, and eventually he was captured by German forces in Cyrenaica. He was imprisoned at Vincigliata Castle until the Italian surrender, and gives a good account of life there and of the vicissitudes through which he passed after he got away. However, the account written by the Australian Brigadier Hargest will remain, I think, the classic both of Vincigliata and of escape.

This is not a story only of the war just ended. It is an account of the author's life, of much travel, much fighting, much riding and game shooting. There are admirable descriptions of life on the North-West Frontier of India, and a most interesting account of the secular and religious life of Tibet which the author observed during an official mission. Like no few celebrated books—*The Pilgrim's Progress* and *Mein Kampf*, to name two—this one owes its being to enforced imprisonment. It was written during four months at Vincigliata.

### "A PECULIAR TREATISE"

As one who does not play chess, I can testify that an ignorance of the game does not diminish enjoyment of Mr. F. V. Morley's book, *My One Contribution to Chess* (Faber, 7s. 6d.). Chess has been important to Mr. Morley's family. His father, a poor boy living at Woodbridge, in Suffolk in the latter part of the last century, had for neighbour the retired Astronomer Royal, Sir G. B. Airy, and this strangely assorted pair came together in a mutual passion for chess and mathematics. Airy pushed the boy into Cambridge, and eventually Morley became head of the Depart-



ment of Mathematics at the Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore. In America his three sons—one the author of this present book—were born; and all three became Rhodes scholars, retracing their father's footsteps and coming back to study—in Oxford. Altogether, what old Airy started when he began to play chess with young Morley was a most fruitful Anglo-American give-and-take.

For the comfort of those who play chess, let me say that there is a lot about chess in the book. I have read it all and enjoyed every word of it, just as I read and enjoy Neville Cardus on cricket, even though I have never played the game. There are not many writers—Bernard Darwin on golf is another, though that is a game I have played with passion and unsuccessful—who can make the non-player aware that he has missed a lot. What is necessary is the rosy flesh of poetry overlying the scientific bones. All three of these writers get this, so that their words are greyhounds on a hill, while most sporting writers achieve nothing but a "dog-track" chase after a dummy.

For the comfort of the man who doesn't play chess, let it be added that Frank Morley's real intention is not to describe or amplify a game but to give us a picture of his father and mother, their forbears and the life of the young growing family in America. It is, also, to let his own philosophic mind play over this and that as the plough of his narrative turns it up to the light. If the ancient Egyptians and Confucius and many another strange companion thus is found for the patrons of "Simpson's Chess Divan," that is only to be expected from this vagrom and allusive expedition. "I am increasingly convinced," says Mr. Morley, when half-way through, "that this is a very peculiar treatise on chess." Fortunately, it is.

#### CHILDHOOD IN VIRGINIA

Mrs. Rebecca Yancey Williams, who has already given us *Father Was a Handful*, gives us some more of father and mother, brothers and sisters, cousins, Negro servants and neighbours in *Carry Me Back* (Michael Joseph, 10s. 6d.). This is the story of a Virginian childhood throughout a year and a half, beginning in March, 1913, when the author was fourteen years old.

The town of Lynchburg, where her father was a lawyer, and the country house a dozen miles away to which the family went for the summer months, are the setting of a narrative full of the bright light that irradiates a fortunate childhood. You must not go to this book for the "big bow-wow" mood or method; but life running in the shallow glancing stream before it joins the river is excellently suggested.

#### A COUNTRY BOOK

I so much enjoyed Miss Monica M. Hutchings's *The Chronicles of Church Farm* that I was proportionately disappointed with *Rural Reflections* (Hodder and Stoughton, 8s. 6d.). The earlier book was about something; the present one is a hodge-podge on a low level. There are naïve little stories of village life; there is a good deal of description of the Somerset scene written in the worst "guide-book" language. "The next typical view of the moor comes from Dunster, a convenient centre for visitors, and easy of access from 'the outside world.'" Beat that, if you can, for a collection of clichés. Why the last one is "quoted," and the others not, I cannot say. A word that many

writers misuse is "respectively." Miss Hutchings misuses it in a frightful sentence: "Chard makes lace and collars, besides being the home of men who invented aeroplanes and artificial limbs respectively." What on earth is the word supposed to mean, used thus?

#### THE LIFE OF INSECTS

**AN INSECT BOOK FOR THE POCKET** (Oxford University Press, 10s. 6d.) is perhaps the best of the series of natural history books for the pocket by the late Edmund Sandars. Illustrated with over 30 pages of coloured photographs and numerous drawings, it deals, not with all the insects in the British Isles (that would have been out of the question in a work of its size), but with the larger ones in detail (those  $\frac{1}{2}$  in. or more in length or having a wing-span of at least 1 in.) and with the main characteristics of certain orders of the smaller ones. A short introduction, which, like the text, is enlivened by a pleasing



#### CHILDREN IN SCULPTURE

*Laus Deo*, a garden figure, life size in bronze, by Lady Kennet (Kathleen Scott). From the Exhibition of Children in Sculpture by the Royal Society of British Sculptors, at the Galleries of the Royal Watercolour Society, 26, Conduit Street, W.1, June 2–20.

sense of humour, deals with the classification and anatomy of insects, but the emphasis of the text is on habits and life-history rather than on anatomy—on those aspects of the life of insects, that is, that are likely to interest the general reader rather than the specialist. One of the best features of the book is its lucidity: the accounts of the social life of ants, bees and wasps and of the construction of a spider's web are in particular models of simple and light-handed exposition.

*Your Holiday in Britain*, by Gordon Cooper (Sampson Low, 12s. 6d.), which is illustrated by over 60 attractive photographs, sets forth in handy form a great deal of information likely to be of use to anyone thinking of taking almost any type of holiday almost anywhere in Britain. J. K. A.



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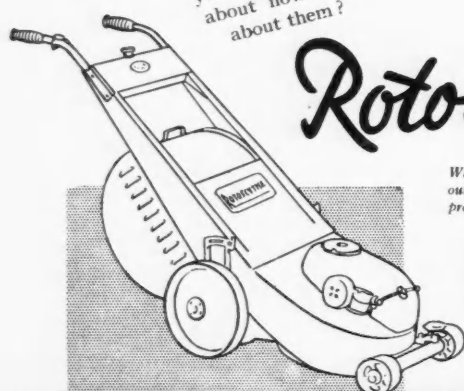
WE ARE all a bit worried sometimes. Also, we have to "work a bit harder". Yet, worry is a great enemy of work. That is why we find relaxation from time to time—in the pub. Not only because we can get a glass of beer there—but because of its companionship. There we hear what the other chap is thinking. There, more than anywhere else, we are on an "easy footing". It's a great thing to be able to rub shoulders with other people. It counted a lot through the war. It counts today. And where else can you so readily mix with others? Nowhere! if not

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## FARMING NOTES

# PLANTING POTATOES IN JUNE

A TRACTOR cutting hay in one field and next door men and boys finishing the planting of main crop potatoes is an unusual sight in June, but it is just a manifestation of this queer season. It is not only in the fens where the land was under water for six weeks that farmers have perforce completed in June jobs that should be done in April. I stopped to have a word with the farmer who was with his gang planting the potatoes. He told me that his ground had been ill to work and he was determined to get a reasonably good bed for his potatoes, but when he was ready to plant he still had not received the seed potatoes from Scotland. He was waiting for Majestics, the kind that most farmers in the South find a safe yielder and popular with merchants, but in the end he took Gladstones. June planting of potatoes is, in my experience, too late to get full yields. I remember that, in 1942, when we were pressed to plant every possible acre, I put in two extra acres in the first week of June. It was time and money wasted. The yield was no more than 6 tons from the two acres. I should have served myself and the farm better if I had put in kale for the young stock and the cows. Conditions may, of course, favour late potatoes this season, and certainly we need some luck in this way. Only a quarter of the potato acreage in Angus had been planted by May 21 according to one merchant who has had to excuse the late delivery of seed potatoes from Scotland. The Angus farmers have been doing their best through April and May to catch up with potato sorting for the seed trade, but owing to the lack of school children to go planting they have been hopelessly short-handed for the two jobs.

### "Enforced Growers"

I AM indebted to Professor A. W. Ashby and the *Westminster Bank Review* for the interesting piece of information that the average weekly consumption of potatoes in Britain rose from 43,600 tons in 1939, to 58,600 tons in 1946. This is probably the largest and most rapid change in our diet during the last century, but it is true enough that, while the immediate demand will keep up while other foods are short, it is extremely doubtful whether the high level of consumption will continue with any improvement in general food supplies. Potatoes are a fill-up food and we eat more of them only because the more interesting foods are scarce. Since bread and flour rationing was instituted the consumption of potatoes has gone up again and the first drop will probably be seen when bread comes off the ration, which surely should be after this harvest. The farmers whom Professor Ashby describes as "enforced growers" will not be unwilling to go out of production and the loss of their output may produce the necessary adjustment in supplies to meet a reduced demand.

### Milk Yields

AT a Young Farmers' Club quiz I heard two teams placing the dairy breeds in order of gallonage yields and butter-fat yields. Everyone put the Friesians first on gallonage and the Ayrshires second. Which breed comes next? According to the Milk Marketing Board, which keeps the official milk records, it is the Red Poll breed with an average yield in recorded herds of 7,390 lb. of milk against the Friesians' 8,958 lb., the Ayrshires' 7,830 lb. and the Short-horns' 6,937 lb. The Guernseys and the Jerseys come next in gallonage

and they outshine all the rest in butter-fat percentages. The milk recording scheme will not be complete until we can get records of butter-fat and solids-not-fat as readily as gallonage records. The counties with the highest proportion (over 25 per cent.) of recorded herds are Berkshire, Essex, Hertfordshire, Kent, Suffolk, Surrey and Sussex.

### Attested Herds

THERE are over 1,000,000 cattle in attested herds in Britain. This is 12.6 per cent. of all our cattle, which is not a very impressive record. Still, steady progress is being made. Scotland with 28.7 per cent. has forged ahead faster than England, where the top counties are Westmorland with 25.2 per cent. of her cattle attested, Surrey with 23.7 per cent. and Berkshire with 22.1 per cent. In Wales, Cardiganshire and Carmarthenshire each with more than half their cattle attested show England up badly.

### Summer Shows

IF the crowds that went to the Bath and West Show at Cheltenham are any guide to the probable attendance at the Royal Show at Lincoln next month, Mr. Alec Hobson and the Council of the R.A.S.E. must be feeling worried at the prospect of an over-crowded showground with inadequate facilities for the entertainment of their guests. The sun and the crowds at Cheltenham, especially on the second day, soon ran the caterers dry of soft drinks, and the most respectable families were seen wandering about the showground, lemonade bottle in hand, looking for a stand-pipe where they could quench their thirst. Catalogues ran out early and the great majority of the public could have gained little satisfaction from their visit, except that of being in a big crowd, which some people evidently enjoy. One farmer was heard to say, "I would as soon be at home threshing," and that is dusty, sweaty penury on a blazing summer day. Let me hasten to add that I do not blame the Bath and West Society for the discomfort of their visitors. They had to manage as best they could with limited facilities for preparing the show, and they did a good job in this. Even the most optimistic show director could not have expected such crowds as poured into the showground.

### Buttercups

HOW strange it is to penetrate now-a-days into a buttercup country. Buttercups flourish in the old permanent pastures on the clays and in some districts (round Malmesbury in Wiltshire for one) these old pastures look just as they were before the war. There may have been good reasons for not ploughing this land for wheat and re-sowing to grass leys, as most of us have done on clay land as well as the easier working soils. Buttercups are killed off by two seasons of ploughing and the new leys are mostly clear of them. The nursemaid of childhood days used to say that at this season the buttercups made the milk a creamy yellow colour, but I suspect that the cows leave the flowerheads alone and that the colouring factor, carotin as the scientist call it, is found in the young grass that grows alongside the buttercups. Sir George Stapledon is a convincing advocate of a mixed sward containing herbs like plantain as well as the grasses and clovers that we sow in a ley, but I have never heard any expert claim virtues for the buttercup. It is, I am afraid, just a useless weed in pasture. CINCINNATUS.



## ESTATE MARKET

# COAL BOARD BUYS COUNTRY HOUSES

THE National Coal Board has made an expenditure on property additional to that which has recently come to the knowledge of the public. Himley Hall and a large acreage, and other properties in the Midlands, have been acquired as offices of the Board, and it is now announced that very large houses in spacious grounds are being purchased by it. According to local reports the acquisitions are for the purpose of accommodating officials who require to live in certain districts. In many ways the matter is of public interest and importance. Innumerable officials will be appointed in connection with various nationalisation projects, and if they are to be provided with residences a financially powerful competitor for property will enter the market.

The exact terms of the latest announcement, as published in *The Times* of May 30, are as follows: "Among large country houses in Wales which have been bought by the south-western division of the Coal Board to house officials is Craig-y-Parc, at Pentrych, Glamorgan, for £15,000 as a residence for Mr. T. S. Charlton, production director in the division. The house has 20 rooms and stands in beautiful grounds. Another property which has been purchased is Uplands, at Radyr, near Cardiff, a 10-roomed house in its own grounds, for which £8,000 was paid. It will be used as a residence for Mr. A. Lindsay, director of finance."

## A LONG TENURE ENDED

SOMETHING akin to the sensation of parting with an old friend is felt by the writer in having to record that Brede Place, near Rye, Sussex, which has often been mentioned in *COUNTRY LIFE*, has passed out of the possession of the Frewen family. They had held it for fully 250 years. Mrs. Clare Sheridan has accepted an offer of £16,000 for the house and 66 acres, through Messrs. Geering and Colyer and Messrs. John D. Wood and Co. The 14th-century stone manor house, which was greatly admired by Sir Edwin Lutyens, has Tudor additions. The gardens, extending to 6 acres, are adorned by topiary, box and yew. The buyer is Mr. Ronald Traquair, of the Coldstream Guards.

## LAUNDE ABBEY SOLD PRIVATELY

LAUNDE ABBEY, six miles from Oakham, Rutland, was the subject of a long historical note in the Estate Market page of *COUNTRY LIFE* on May 9. The estate of 1,585 acres has been privately sold to the Rev. H. Sparling, of Sedburgh, Yorkshire, by Messrs. Knight, Frank and Rutley. Not much of the once flourishing establishment, founded in the reign of Henry I for Black Canons, still remains, but when an Elizabethan house was built in the Abbey grounds for a private owner, the private chapel was incorporated and it now forms a wing of the house. The chapel contains stained glass of rich colour and quaint design, as well as a wall tomb of Gregory, Lord Cromwell, who died in 1551, and a rude carving of his armorial bearings.

Ecclesiastically, the interest of Launde Abbey is the vigorous fight made by its priors to save part at least of its plate and other movables when the notorious Lord Keeper, Thomas Cromwell, made up his mind to appropriate it. He succeeded in his nefarious scheme, but did not live long to enjoy ownership. The story of Launde Abbey's struggles sheds a strong light on the readiness of persons living near the Abbey to act as

informers about what the priors tried to do to protect their rights.

Arlington Manor, near Newbury, Berkshire, bought by the Mary Hare Grammar School for Deaf Children, and recently mentioned in these columns, changed hands at an auction held by Messrs. Dreweatt, Watson and Barton, who state that the price paid was £20,000 for the residence, five cottages and 154 acres of park and woodland.

## THE LATE MR. J. L. GARVIN'S HOME

GREGORIES, Beaconsfield, Buckinghamshire, the home of the late Mr. J. L. Garvin and originally the farm-house on an extensive estate that Edmund Burke held, recently came under the hammer of Mr. W. H. J. Long (Messrs. Hampton and Sons). The house is about a mile from the centre of Beaconsfield, and it was referred to in the Report of the Royal Commission on Historical Monuments in Buckinghamshire. Mr. Garvin adapted an ancient barn near it as a library.

There are nearly 6 acres of land in the freehold. Bidding began at £6,000, but after quickly reaching £8,500 it stopped, and the freehold was withdrawn at a formal bid of £10,000 for private treaty.

## BROADLAND PROPERTY CHANGES HANDS

CAPTAIN K. R. WATT has bought Burnley Hall, Norfolk, and about 1,550 acres, formerly the residence of the late Sir Gerald Talbot. The property is noted for wild-fowl shooting, comprising one of the broads connected with the River Thurne, as well as some farms and small holdings. Mr. Norman J. Hodgkinson (Messrs. Bidwell and Sons) acted for the buyer, and the firm will manage the estate. Messrs. Hampton and Sons were agents for the vendors.

## KEEN DEMAND FOR COUNTRY HOUSES

EXCEPTIONALLY lively competition marked the auction by Messrs. Knight, Frank and Rutley, acting with Messrs. Lacy Scott and Sons, of Abbots Leigh, near Pulborough, Sussex, with 3 acres, and the hammer fell at £8,100. The Grange, a house of the Georgian period in 38 acres, at Crawley Down, Sussex, has changed hands since the auction. It includes three cottages and a detached residence. Another property called The Grange, about 40 acres, at Farnham Common, Buckinghamshire, has been sold by Messrs. Knight, Frank and Rutley and Messrs. Frost, to a client of Messrs. Whatley Hill and Co. The house contains old Jacobean oak. A lodge, a bungalow and a pair of cottages are also comprised in the sale.

Pednor House, near Chesham, Buckinghamshire, also sold by Messrs. Knight, Frank and Rutley in conjunction with a local agent, incorporates the materials of a 16th-century house and tithe-barn. On the 125 acres are model farm buildings and an 18th-century farm-house and cottages.

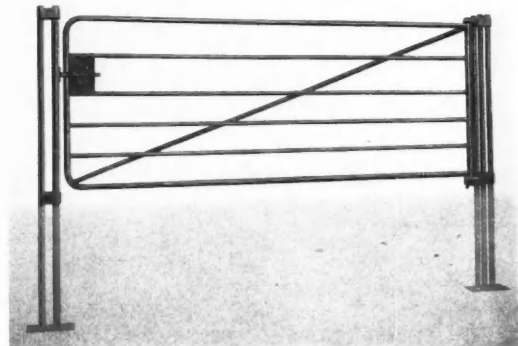
A modernised Georgian house, in a well sheltered spot on the southern fringe of Dartmoor, has been sold privately.

Highlands, Ivybridge, Devon, standing in about 72 acres, has been sold by Messrs. Knight, Frank and Rutley.

Snowdon and its environment make up the main view from an Anglesey house and 19 acres, known as Carreg Boeth, at Llanddaniel, also sold by Messrs. Knight, Frank and Rutley.

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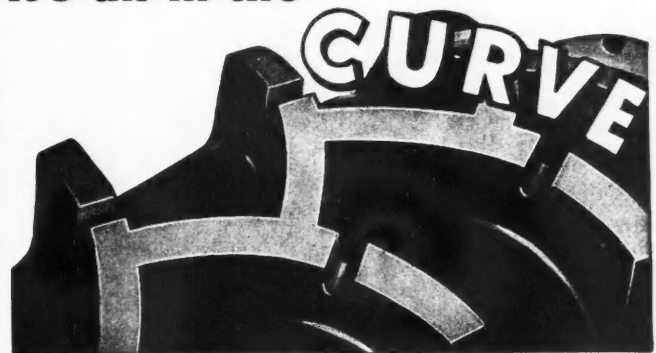
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# STYLED

## for Sun and Sea

● (Left) White cotton frock printed with florin spots in nigger, scarlet or blue; it has a sun top or can be crossed over and tied round the waist. Horrockses Fashions from Simpsons. Aquamarine and coral-pink cotton frock with puff sleeves and pockets that untie and lie flat for laundering. Horrockses Fashions

● (Below) Sun and swim suit in a white rayon printed with sweet peas that has been treated to be waterproof. The skirt zips around brief trunks; the brassière has adjustable straps to allow one to tan evenly. Jantzen, from Lillywhites

DESIGNERS have let themselves go in their collections for the seaside and produced charming and versatile clothes, full of colour and novelty. Even the slacks have caught the prevailing liveliness and gone gay. The sober classic greys and navy slacks seem almost obliterated by the cinnamons, crimsons, the sail red, ice blue, lemon and maize, while alongside the shirts are even brighter. Yellow and red is the most popular combination of all; crimson slacks with a lemon or mustard shirt, clay-red slacks with honey or maize, or tawny yellow with rust. Some slacks are attached to pinafore tops—very smart worn with a polo-necked sweater on a cold day, or one of the sweaters knitted like a blouse with a collar to pull out and over the top.

Your beach dress this summer is generally printed in bright, clear colours and generally full in the skirt. It can play several roles in the wardrobe—by a flick of the hand the cotton frock with the florin dots illustrated can be transformed from a sunbathing dress with a bare midriff to a crossover bodice that you can lunch or dance in. On the beach it ties as a brassière top. The low-backed and backless linens and cottons have matching boleros or jackets or a shawl scarf to hide the bare back and tuck in either side of the front of a low, round neckline. Printed cottons at Lillywhites, Noah's Ark animals in fresh, mixed pastels, button down the front and have full, gathered knee-length skirts. The tops are cut like a shirt and underneath there are brassières and shorts—the classic formula for the sun. Play suits in the same cotton are worn over short trunks and are intended for the very young and the very slim. Laeta Ramage tailor their heavy linen play suit-cum-town suit and show it as a tailored shirt, skirt and shorts. The shirt is extra long to tuck in well; the skirt has deep knapsack pockets and is saddle-stitched. Shorts end midway to the knees. Printed linen midcalf slacks are teamed with fine wool sweaters in deep and vivid colours—emerald, cinnamon, splendid for sailing.

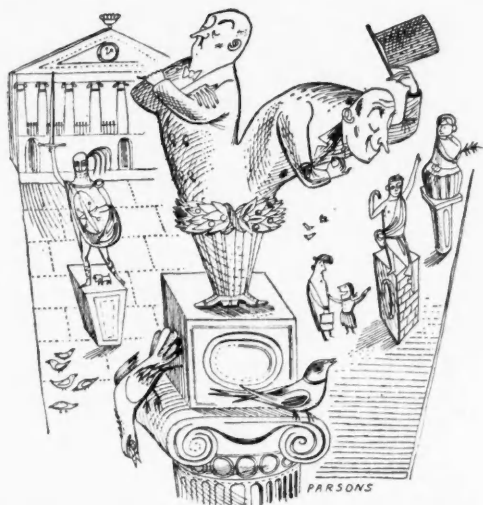
Swim suits are smartest when they are navy, plum, black, turquoise, and either one-piece, with white shoulder straps, or two-piece. Satin swim suits, woven with elastic, are gauged across a front panel or sometimes all over. Cottons and rayons have been specially processed to be waterproof, absolutely fast coloured and generally serviceable, and they make some attractive two-piece swim suits, plain as well as printed. Styles vary very much from those in fancy printed fabrics with full, short

(Continued on page 1130)





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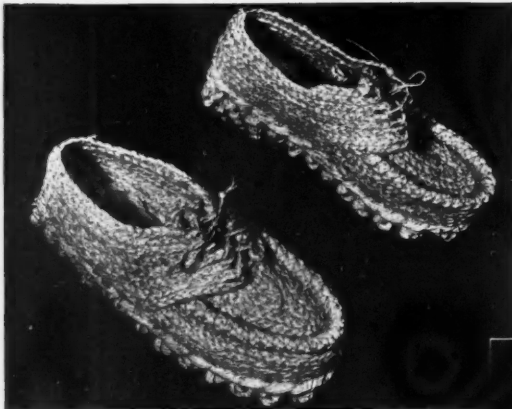
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### RAFFIA ACCESSORIES FOR HIGH SUMMER

(Left) Laced shoes from Raynes in natural colour. (Below) A sun hat decorated with flowers and gillie shoes in natural colour and red. Both from Fortnum and Mason



bloomers to simple tailored cotton ducks and striped linens.

TO face the rigours of the English seaside there are masses of warm jackets, cardigans, sweaters and top-coats. The indispensable odd jackets are fingertip length and loose, in brilliant colours, wool jersey, fleecy blanket cloth, camel, tweed or handknitted. Or they can be belted in snugly, as Jaeger show them, with turndown collars and double-breasted fastening. Sometimes there is a hood attached. Cardigans in dog-tooth checked wool jersey, tweed or flannel, have deep patch pockets. Sweaters are ribbed like a fisherman's, striped like a footballer's, knitted to look like a blouse, or plain, round-necked and absolutely classical in design. Skirts cut with eight gores have an attractive swing to the hemline, yet keep the trim silhouette. Colours are combined for these outfits. It is rare to see matching set of slacks,

sweater and jacket, and the brighter the colours the better the outfit looks this year. In their advance autumn collection, Dorville show thick hand-knitted grey sweaters which pull down well over the hips and are belted in tightly to the waist with a linen webbing belt in bright, intense shades of orange or green.

Beach accessories carry on the peasant scheme of the full-skirted frocks. Milkmaid hats in raffia with wide brims, tiny shallow crowns, tie under the chin with ribbons and match the sandals and laced shoes which are made from plaited raffia on deep soles like clogs. Your bag for the beach can be a canvas knapsack or bucket, an immense plastic envelope quilted all over or plastic and shaped like a large fish. Wide linen webbing belts laced in front have a small kitbag attached for money and make-up. Lotus are making wedge cotton and linen sandals from the same material as the beach dress.

Contours for the beach this year differ considerably from last. The tailored things, that is slacks, shorts and shirts, remain as classic in line as ever: they are always best when they are simple. But colour plays a tremendous part, and the general effect is more feminine and the colours used are deeper. This year, the crisp summer dresses and the beach dresses have the fullness springing directly from the waistline, not from the hips. Belts are wide, often inset, and the tiny waist is everything.

Colours are in the brighter range of pastels, always combined with white—a begonia pink and a salmon pink, coral, turquoise, azure, lettuce green and heliotrope. The Batik cottons used for the West Africa trade make some most effective three-piece outfits for the beach in quite a different colour category, being mixtures of dark, rich green and sepia brown with peacock blues or tawny yellows used with crimson and sultry pinks. Heliotrope is a shade that looks new and smart.

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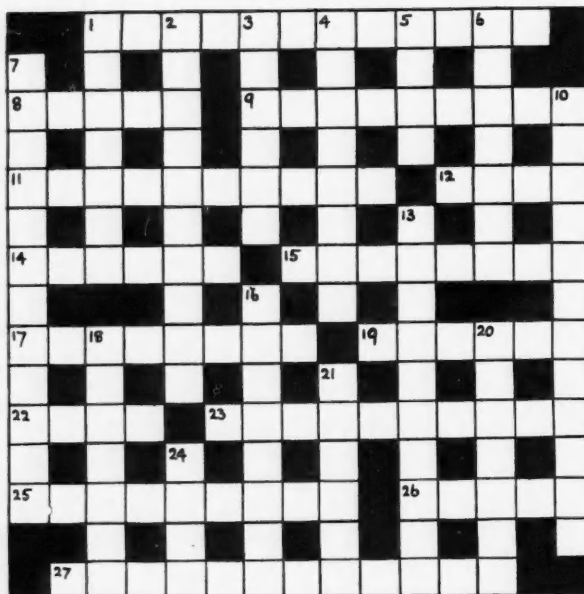
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## CROSSWORD No. 905

Two guineas will be awarded for the first correct solution opened. Solutions (in a closed envelope) must reach "Crossword No. 905, COUNTRY LIFE, 2-10, Tavistock Street, Covent Garden, London, W.C.2," not later than the first post on Thursday, June 19, 1947.

NOTE.—This Competition does not apply to the United States.



Name .....  
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**SOLUTION TO No. 904.** The winner of this Crossword, the clues of which appeared in the issue of June 6, will be announced next week.

**ACROSS.**—1 and 5, Chipping Norton; 9, Souvenir; 10, Stores; 11, Oversees; 13, String; 14, Sky; 16, Finery; 19, Bellhop; 20, Cobalt; 21, Leo; 26, Retina; 27, Trestles; 28, Hockey; 29, Antedate; 30, Dreams; 31, Jettison.  
**DOWN.**—1, Castor; 2, Inured; 3, Please; 4, Noises; 6, Outstrip; 7, Turbines; 8, Nosegays; 12, Skillet; 15, Let; 16, Fog; 17, Scorched; 18, Obstacle; 19 and 22, Blenheim orange; 23, Assent; 24, Cloaks; 25, Astern.

### ACROSS

1. Where it is still possible to have a surfeit of cheese? (7, 5)
8. What may be in the locket (5)
9. Curly, Tubby and Ginger (9)
11. In the surreptitious manner of a burglar (10)
12. It is transparently useful (4)
14. Not the German kind of doodle (6)
15. George Herbert's rectory, or an Oxford college to be? (8)
17. Ice-leaps (anagr.) (8)
19. Interfere (6)
22. That terrible Russian (4)
23. The gate has trees in front of it (10)
25. Silent (9)
26. "And slowly answered Arthur from the ——" "The old order changeth"—Tennyson (5)
27. Current traffic condition (6, 6)

### DOWN

1. She is Irish (7)
2. Address for the ambassador (10)
3. Boat for the most part of anything but smart appearance (6)
4. In other words a cry in the sedge brought back memories (8)
5. The man of property makes a confession (4)
6. His career may call him to the bars (7)
7. Best in prayer (anagr.) (12)
10. This team takes 22 hours, as you might say (6, 6)
13. A castle had to be to be any good (10)
16. Banter between plate-layers? (8)
18. Is paint his forte? (7)
20. This sets the site of the Taj Mahal in its surroundings (7)
21. It probably included a dozen cups original (6)
24. Don't upset her: you might make her rave (4)

The winner of Crossword No. 903 is

Mrs. W. Kent,  
11, Chesham Place,  
London, S.W.1.

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